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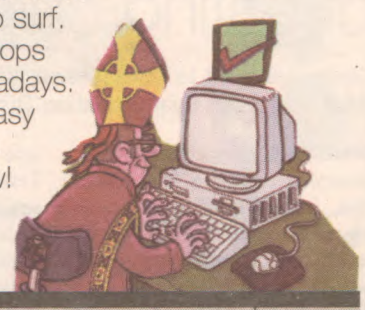

WE BRING GOOD NEWS | DIOCESE OF OXFORD REPORTER IN BERKSHIRE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND OXFORDSHIRE | NOVEMBER 2000 | No 117

Welcome to the family!

COME AND JOIN THE CELEBRATIONS (top row) The flag flew on Westminster Abbey as the new Bishop of Dorchester was congratulated by *(top right)* the Bishop of Oxford and the Archbishop of Canterbury. But first to receive his greetings after the consecration were his wife and children. Pictured with Bishop Colin are (left to right) his son Jonathan, Sarah his wife and daughters Kate and Pippa. **LOTS MORE PHOTOGRAPHS ON PAGE 20**

Colin Fletcher was consecrated bishop on 4 October and exchanged his life as chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury to be Bishop of Dorchester

THE FLAG on Westminster Abbey fluttered in the autumn sunshine. Familiar faces from the Oxford Diocese emerged from unfamiliar London streets. It was the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, the day Canon Colin William Fletcher, chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury was consecrated Area Bishop of Dorchester.

The Archbishop personally welcomed the Fletcher family, members of churches in which the bishop designate had once served, civic dignitaries from Oxfordshire including the Lord Lieutenant and the High Sheriff, representatives from other faiths and the Dean of Dallas who had travelled from the USA for the occasion.

In a service which combined pomp with simplicity and music from the 16th century with modern hymns, the Archbishop's declaration that part of a bishop's calling is to promote the Church's mission throughout the world took on a new significance given Colin Fletcher's worlwide travels with the Archbishop. Significant too was the unusually large number of bishops who assisted at the consecration. Forty of them laid hands in prayer on the bishop designate so that he almost disappeared in a sea of white and red and black.

After the consecration the Archbishop handed his former chaplain a Bible and a pastoral staff before presenting him as the Bishop of Dorchester to the congregation. There was warm applause especially when, in the midst of so much ceremony, the Bishop Colin strode over to greet his wife and children in the choir stalls.

In his address the Venerable Gordon Ogilvie, Archdeacon of Nottingham spoke of St Francis and of his stigmata which he said meant that you were a marked man who had died to the world and belonged to Jesus. A bishop like any of Christ's disciples is called to take up his cross daily. That cross is rugged, heavy and painful, especially if our expectations of our bishops are 'far too unrealistic'. 'What the Lord requires is that we act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God. His expectations are about quality not quantity. If the rest of us will control the quantity, you Colin can certainly deliver the quality' he concluded.

The service drew to an end as we sang our hearts out to 'I cannot tell why he, whom angels worship', shook hands with the new Bishop and streamed out into the sunshine. It was only then that we learned that the fire engines we had heard during the service had been heading for a fire in the Abbey treasury and an evacuation of the entire building had only just been avoided. Those same angels were clearly watching over Bishop Colin and his family. May it always be so.

Text by Christine Zwart
Photographs by Frank Blackwell

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the Doorpost Information PAGE

One page says it all

Courses, training, festivals, events

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Opinion

More than one way of eating carrots

Christians need to rediscover a living hope says **Chris Neal**, Diocesan Evangelisation Officer

CHATTING over coffee with a group of people a few weeks ago, I mentioned that I was more hopeful now for real structural change and engaging mission within the Church than I had been for the previous 28 years of my ordained ministry. The response was interesting. One person almost with tears, said 'That is the first positive encouragement I have received for a long time.'

Generating hope

Reflecting on that response it struck me that so frequently, as Church, we find ourselves living in a culture of seeming deprivation. Resources seem scarce and appear to be declining, and financial constraints feel imprisoning and limiting.

Yet this is so far from the culture of the early Church, and from the experience of many contemporary Christians, especially in the third world.

In his first letter Peter celebrated the fact that through the Resurrection of Jesus we have been born again into a living hope. The motivation of the early Church as it preached Jesus was its conviction that this world is not the sum total of human existence. For them heaven was a reality which broke into their everyday lives in Kingdom living.

We need to rediscover that vibrant hope which Christ offers for our own encouragement and importantly we need to live it for the sake of the society in which we live. Broken hearted, confused and lost people are hungry to experience the possibility of hope.

Revival or Resurrection

This phrase was given to me just yesterday, and I have been pondering on it for the past twenty four hours. Many of us want the church to be renewed, revived, but on terms and in ways in which we feel safe and secure. The New Testament doesn't promise revival, but does offer Resurrection. The new life which is offered will have connections with the past, but will also look very different. As the prophet Isaiah discovered, he worshipped a God of new beginnings who was calling him to leave the past things and move on to the new.

That sounds dangerous and difficult, but if we are living by hope then we will be willing to live with openness, risk and vulnerability and discover that we are becoming the new thing God wants us to be.

Dangling carrots!

A few weeks ago someone who had heard me getting excited about new ways of being and 'doing church' came to me and said 'I want to share your vision, but you are dangling carrots and I don't know how to eat them.' My first thought was that at least the person recognised the carrots. Having an openness to God's Spirit must be the first requirement. My second thought was that I am not sure that there is only one way of eating carrots.

I believe fervently that we need to pray that God's Spirit will raise up people across the Diocese who will want to engage with him and allow his Spirit to direct us into new ways of being church. Of course there are principles there to guide us, and I want to help us to discover them, but in the end it is our hope and expectation in the living God that will allow us to see the way forward. I believe that God is still passionately in love with his creation. He is calling us, his Church, to share in his passion and ministry.

Details of a Half Day of Prayer on 18 November and the Prayer Network are in the DOORPOST.

General Synod Election Results

ON THE 12 October 2000 the elections for General Synod members from the Oxford Diocese took place. Eight 'Proctors in Convocation' (clergy) were elected to represent the Diocese, and ten members of the House of Laity. The Presiding Officer was John Rees *(pictured above with Debbie Roberts, Legal Assistant and Mary Saunders, Diocesan Electoral Registration Officer at the computer.)* The election was by single transferable voting using a computer for the first time. The Revd Robert Key and the Revd Jonathan Baker were both elected at the first stage. A newcomer to the elections was the Revd Richard Thomas, the Diocesan Director of Communications. Amongst the laity both Dr Philip Giddings and Dr Carole Cull were elected at the first stage.

Clergy and laity polls were topped by conservative evangelicals, and conservative Catholics are better represented now than in the last General Synod. See list below for those elected.

HOUSE OF CLERGY

The Revd Moira Aston Assistant Curate of Thatcham; **the Revd Jonathan Baker** Vicar of Holy Trinity Reading and St Mark Reading; **the Revd Valerie Bonham** Assistant Curate, Holy Trinity Cookham; **the Revd Canon Simon Brown** Rector of Burnham Team Ministry, Area Dean of Burnham and Slough and Diocesan Consultant for Deanery Development; **the Revd Richard Cattley** Vicar of Christ the Cornerstone, Milton Keynes; **the Revd Robert Key** Vicar of St Andrews, Oxford; **the Revd Hugh Lee** Work and Economic Life Missioner; **the Revd Richard Thomas** Diocesan Communications Director.

HOUSE OF LAITY

Mr Michael Berrett Solicitor and honorary advisor to the Citizens Advice Bureau; **Dr Carole Cull** Medical Statistician in the Diabetes Trials Unit of the Nuffield Dept of Medicine in the University of Oxford; **Miss Prudence Dailey** Business systems analyst in the international department of a large retail company based in Maidenhead; **Dr Philip Giddings** Senior lecturer in Politics at Reading University; **Mrs Viviane Hall** Volunteer Adviser with Banbury Citizen's Advice Bureau, married with three children; **Mr John Hanks** Chartered Accountant and treasurer at Pusey House; **Mr Gavin Oldham** Chairman, Share plc and Chief Executive, The Share Centre Ltd (retail stockbroker); **Mrs Beverley Ruddock** Senior Educational Psychologist and Honourary Lecturer at UCL; **Dr Anna Thomas-Betts** Senior Lecturer in Geophysics at Imperial College London; **Mr David Wright** retired for three years, previously senior partner at firm of Oxford solicitors.

Orthodox ecumenical officer for Oxon

Churches Together in Oxfordshire has appointed Bede Gerrard to be the new county Ecumenical Officer. Bede is a member of the Orthodox Church and worships at the Church of the Holy Trinity and the Annunciation, Canterbury Road, Oxford. Contact Bede at St Columba's URC, Alfred Street, Oxford OX1 4EH.

News in brief

Wells for India

St Michael's Church, Blewbury has been supporting the Blewbury Millennium Year target of £10,000 for the Wells for India charity, by counting up the number of taps in their homes, multiplying that number by anything from 20p to £1 and contributing the total towards the fund. It is the second year running the monsoon has failed in Rajasthan and the lives of 26 million people are under threat. Among the projects Wells for India hopes to finance is a large tube well which will supply up to ten villages and their livestock with drinking water.

For details contact: Mrs Hilda Hester (01235) 850183

Creative ideas for Christmas

Christmas 2000 is a resource pack from the Christian Publicity Organisation that aims to help your church make the most of what can be, for many church leaders, a busy but frustrating time. The pack includes worship resources, creative ideas for services on New Year's Eve, and other ideas for reaching out into the community.

You can get the pack from: CPO, Garcia Estate, Canterbury Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN13 1BW 01903 263354.

Together on the way

This is the theme for the Prayer for Christian Unity Week from the 18 to 25 January 2001. The phrase was originally chosen for our reflection, prayer and action by the Ecumenical Group of Christians in Romania who were asked to prepare the first draft of the material. The material to support the Week is available from CTBI publications, 31 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BN 020 7898 1300

Christingle light in the darkness

Between Advent Sunday and Candlemas more than 18,000 children and young people will run away from home. For many young people the 'Season of Light' can be one of despair and darkness. The popular Christingle services help the Children's Society to raise much needed funds for their work with disadvantaged children. The services can also be a way of encouraging new people into church. The candle represents our continuous prayers for children who are homeless and on the street, says Rosemary Hill of the Children's Society.

For a Children's Society Christingle pack telephone 020 7841 4535.

Going for a green Church

The Bishop of London helped to lead an ecumenical service at St Paul's Cathedral to launch Eco-Congregation which aims to get Christians thinking and acting on environmental questions. It will also reward churches who make a significant contribution to their local environment.

For more details contact Going for Green 01942 612617/6.

Sight impaired people can now get a free audio version of The DOOR by contacting Graham Winterbourne on 01884 840285.

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News

Blackbird Leys comes in from the cold

HAS THE Church lost contact with the street? Not it seems in Blackbird Leys. Ever since the first houses were built there in the sixties the area has been stereotyped as 'a slum of the future'. But slurs have acted as spurs and the community is undergoing slow transformation.

At the heart of that transformation is the ecumenical Church of the Holy Family. It was to make that church's engagement with the community more widely known and to draw some theological principles from the process that a study day was arranged there on 29 September. Among the theologians and church leaders who attended was the Bishop of Oxford.

Jim Hewitt, the church's Community Worker said that the church had contributed to the community's development but those involved needed to be aware where their motivation and energy come from.

A silent video shown by Marsha Jackson from the Oxford Development Education Centre showed a robust community at ease with itself – gathering for a fun day, dancing, painting, signing a petition for a new Afro-Caribbean Community centre.

A group of local volunteers talked movingly about their work in Blackbird Leys. There was Molly who, when her six children grew up, went into local politics, Enid who runs a tenants association and Marion who helps at the Credit Union and said 'As a Christian I am asked by Christ to do what I can to reflect something of God's glory. This what keeps me moving forward'.

Nick Allan a youth worker from Oxford Youth Works 'with one foot in the church and the other in the community' said building relationships was the important thing. When kids ask about God they want bluntness not ambivalence. 'It is as though we have stitched back the veil that was rent aside at the crucifixion and are stopping people getting to God', he said.

The day ended with a consensus that Holy Family's contact with the streets of Blackbird Leys has a wider application. The Vicar, James Ramsay, insists that they have not got all the answers. That may be so but they seem so much further along the road to finding them than the rest of us.

Christine Zwart

The Princess and the poor

Photo: Ian Watkin

The extensively refurbished St Aldates Church, Oxford, played host to HRH The Princess Royal recently when the Princess was attending a reception as Patron of Opportunity International UK. One of the highlights of the evening came when the Princess presented a loan on behalf of Opportunity International of £230 to Delores Ramón (*pictured above*) from the Dominican Republic who makes and sells snacks on the streets of her slum area. The loan was in celebration of the fact that opportunity International has created one million jobs among the world's poor since it began operations 30 years ago. When asked a few weeks ago if she would like to come to England, Delores said 'If you go with me Lord, I'm not afraid of anything.'

New canons for Christ Church

Photo: Frank Blackwell

Broadmoor Hospital's chaplain, Trevor Walt is one of five clergy to be appointed an Honorary Canon of Christ Church Cathedral. The other four Canons installed on 7 October in the Cathedral were Canon Anthony Stidolph, Canon Philip Nixon, Canon Christine Redgrave and Canon Tim Higgins. **Pictured from left to right: Dominic Walker** the Bishop of Reading; **Colin Fletcher** the Bishop of Dorchester; **Anthony Stidolph** Chaplain of Wellington College; **Phillip Nixon** Vicar of Goring and Area Dean of Henley; **Richard Harries** the Bishop of Oxford; **Tim Higgins** Team Rector and Area Dean of Aylesbury; **Christine Redgrave** Vicar of Woolhampton and Area Director of Ordinands; **Mike Hill** the Bishop of Buckingham and **Trevor Walt.**

AS WE go to press it has been announced that the Revd Christopher Hall, retiring after ten years as Co-ordinator of Christian Concern for One World has also been made a Canon of Christ Church.

From Kidlington to Prague

JANET WARREN, the Kidlington Jubilee 2000 co-ordinator writes

DRESSED in sombre attire, campaigners from all quarters of the globe converged on the Church of St Simon and St Juda in the centre of Prague for the service that would launch Jubilee 2000's IMF/World Bank demonstration. A Czech Protestant pastor led the service, an Israeli rabbi chanted the Old Testament reading (Deut 15 v1-5) in Hebrew; an Anglican priest from Zambia preached in English; and a Japanese Buddhist monk intoned prayers.

Worshippers left the church to join the throng gathering outside for the 'funeral procession' to the foot of Letna Hill, the former site of the statue of Stalin that had once dominated Prague. The crowd of about 2000 followed with smaller hand-held crosses for each of the 19,000 children who would die that day from debt-related causes.

As the mourners reverently laid their crosses on the ground and paused to listen to addresses from representatives of the campaign around the world, including the Czech Jubilee 2000, the World Council of Churches, and Jubilee 2000 UK. With fresh resolve, the mourners transformed into a band of demonstrators with placards, chants and whistles to make their way down into the Old Town Square. There, contrary to what much of the press would have us believe, they did not throw stones, attack the police or trash the nearest McDonalds. They simply disbanded and mostly stopped in town for a spot of lunch and a bit of shopping before boarding their coaches for the 30 hour or so journey back home. And was it worth the effort? Most people had set out in ones and twos with the conviction that, following the dismal outcome of Okinawa, to do something would be infinitely preferable to doing nothing.

The final consensus was that there is still a place for thoughtful and law-abiding campaigning. After all, Anne Pettifor did get to talk with Czech President Vaclav Havel, World Bank President James Wolfensohn and IMF Managing Director Horst Kohler. Jubilee 2000 may not have achieved its aims yet, but it is certainly being taken seriously in high places.

Solidarity with Palestine

A group from Holy Family Church, Blackbird Leys met on the 12 October in answer to a call from SABEEL Ecumenical Theology Group in Jerusalem to show solidarity with the Palestinian people at this critical time and call for justice for them. They responded by sending a letter to Robin Cook to ask for implementation of UN resolutions 242 and 338. and with a candlelit vigil in Bonn Square.

Four Seasons

Four stained glass panels called 'The Four Seasons' have been created by the Charlbury stained glass artist, Di Gold, for Beckley C of E school as its Millennium project. They were made with the practical help of the children and dedicated on 13 October 'to the glory of God' by the Vicar of Beckley, the Revd William Brierley. When the artist unveiled the panels, the audience broke into spontaneous applause.

Alpha packs the Apollo

About 1400 people filled the Apollo Theatre Oxford on Wednesday, 4 October for 'An Opportunity to Explore the Meaning of Life', the regional launch of the autumn Alpha courses. The event, which was supported by 35 churches in the area, was led by Nicky Gumbel and an Alpha team from Holy Trinity Brompton. It included live music, and testimonies from local people whose lives had been changed by Alpha, among them were Becky, whose story was featured in The DOOR and Tim for whom life was mainly 'beer, cigarettes and drugs' until he was invited by a friend to Alpha. Nicky Gumbel gave the Alpha introductory talk 'Christianity boring, untrue or irrelevant ?' He told his audience, many of whom were about to embark on an Alpha course: 'The amazing news is this. Jesus died to set us free from guilt, from addiction, free ultimately from death'.

behind the Door

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People & places

Reading choir hits high note

No fewer than nine members of the choir of Christ Church, Reading, have passed their Bishop's Chorister Awards – an unusually high number for any church to achieve at one time. They have been trained by the choir's Director of Music, Philip Aspden, BA, FRCO, and were examined in a wide range of musical skills. The choir now has sixteen Bishop's Choristers, almost half its total strength. The photograph shows *(back row, left to right)*: Philip Aspden, Organist and Choirmaster at Christ Church, Reading, David Croton, John Carne, David Barnard, Peter Smith *(front row, left to right)*: Rebecca Dudman, Emily Ash, Valerie Aspden, Elspeth Crocker, Andrew Cook

Bishop's Chorister Awards 2000

The Bishop's Choristers will receive their Awards from the Bishop of Reading in Christ Church Cathedral on Saturday, 11 November.

Junior Awards

Thomas Dale (St Giles', Oxford); **Toby Caldicott** (St James the Great, Radley); **Adrian Kaye, Elizabeth Telford** (St Andrew's, Hagbourne); **Andrew Cook, Rebecca Dudman** (Christ Church, Reading); **Layla Dudley, Lauren Dudley** (St Laurence, Winslow); **Amy Stothard, Natalie Awdry** (St John's, Lacy Green); **Rachel-Jane Wylie, Victoria Alexander-Wilkins, Julia Weatherley, Elisabeth Rutherford,** (St Peter's, Caversham); **Bryony Wilkes, Fiona Watt, Sophie Rose** (St John the Baptist, Cookham Dean).

Senior awards

Joanna Smith (St John the Baptist, Cookham Dean); **Elspeth Crocker** (Christ Church, Reading); **Fiona McLean, Naomi Andrew, Vicki Kelner, Rebecca Robinson, Heather Allcock** (St Laurence, Winslow); **Sue Ledger, Jane Ely, Miriam Wood, Elizabeth Edwards** (St Mary-le-More, Wallingford); **Emily Ash, Valerie Aspden** (Christ Church, Reading); **Graham Holiday** (St Laurence, Winslow); **Peter Smith, John Carne, David Croton, David Barnard** (Christ Church, Reading).s

Help to break the silence

Saturday, 25 November is an International Day of Prayer about Violence against Women. A year ago The DOOR focussed on domestic violence which is rarely discussed in churches even though it affects one in four women and some men. We were disappointed at the response to our feature. Now to help churches to 'break the silence' the Board of Social Responsibility and the Mothers' Union have produced a display board with statistics about domestic violence, suggestions for church support and advice for victims. The board can be borrowed by parish churches, organisers of events and exhibitors at resources days. Leaflets accompany the displays. Contact the BSR office on 01865 208213.

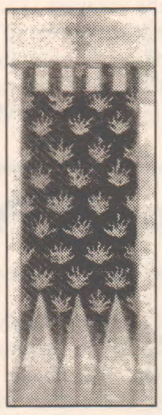
In memory of all the women who have known suffering and death
Facing their pain with courage and dignity
We break the silence:
And raise our voices in anger and hope.

From *Breaking the Silence*, a leaflet with prayers and liturgy ideas produced by Churches Together in England for the Day of Prayer.

SNIPPETS

St Denys' banner

Northmoor church near Witney is dedicated to St Denys, the patron saint of France. To celebrate the Millennium the church commissioned an Oriflamme, the banner of St Denys. The banner *(pictured)*, which was dedicated on 8 October by the Bishop of Oxford, has a scarlet background, gold flames woven into the material and seven green silk tassels. St Denys was sent to France by the Pope and became the first Bishop of Paris before he was beheaded and thrown into the Seine. The Oriflamme, which hung in St Denys' Abbey in Paris in peace time, was carried into battle because it was thought to protect the King and his troops.



Generous donor

Michael Timms, a churchwarden at St Margaret's, Iver Heath has donated enough blood to fill ten human bodies! In recognition of the 75 pints he has given he was awarded a Wedgewood plate by the National Blood Service at a ceremony in St Andrew's Methodist Church. Michael, aged 52, began giving blood when he was 18 and heard that his mother needed six pints of blood after giving birth to him.

Be Still and Know

The Young Seekers, an after school club at All Saints, Downshire Square in Reading have released a CD called 'Be Still and Know' to celebrate the ordination of the assistant curate, Father Stuart Richards. Most of the songs are original compositions by Katherine Danyluk, one of the Young Seekers leaders. For each CD sold a donation of £2 will be made to the Ear Foundation in Nottingham, a charity helping deaf children to hear and speak following cochlear implantations. Katherine's daughter, Alexandra, who can be heard on the CD, received her implant two years ago and has since made remarkable progress. Other profits will be be used in Young Seekers projects. The CD costs £10 (cheques to 'K.Danyluk') from: All Saints' Vicarage, Downshire Square, Reading RG1 6NH.

Sooty's resting place

If you want to find the landmarks of Rotherfield Peppard near Henley including its favourite animals, you need look no further than a tapestry completed by the women of the parish for the millennium. The tapestry, which was dedicated by the Rector, the Revd Butler Smith whose wife helped to work it, hangs in the church beneath the west window. Among the 'landmarks' included are All Saints Church, the church school and Sooty the Rectory cat who spent most of her time in church and even attended weddings and funerals!

All hands together

A collage in the shape of a tree was made using the outlines of hands at a Parade Service in Abingdon recently. Christ Church's church plant on the Long Furlong estate holds a number of such services each year for uniformed organisations with no direct church links. The tree illustrates the Kingdom of God as in the mustard seed parable and Ezekial (17 v 21).

Standing up to bats

A new report from the Movement against Bats in Churches concludes 'that churches are not in control of bats – bats control the churches.' *Our Beleaguered Heritage* has been written by Catherine Ward who says bats do extensive damage to the contents and fabric of our churches yet they and their roosts are protected by law. This scandalous situation, says the author, creates problems for conservationists, clergy, churchwardens and church cleaners. It poses a possible health risk and is a threat to our beleaguered churches.

Our Beleaguered Heritage is available from Mrs Catherine Ward, 2 Rose Cottages, Victoria Road, Ledbury, Herefordshire HR8 2DB. Tel: 01531 635515. Send £2 to cover costs (cheques to 'Movement against Bats in Churches').

Times past and present for a Girls' Friendly Society

The Advent Ring is the high point of a local Girls' Friendly Society year. Who better to write about life in a rural branch than Marjorie Edwards who for 30 years ran the GFS in Long Wittenham

THE WITTENHAMS 'Long' and 'Little' are two and a half miles apart. We are ten miles south of Oxford, a typical Oxfordshire village with thatched cottages, one shop, one bus a week and a visit from the mobile library every two weeks. There is always something happening to bring people together such as the crowning of the village May Queen in spring and the major Christian festivals.

The GFS custom of the 'Advent Ring' is the culmination of each GFS year. The ring is made from an assortment of greenery with four white candles at the Advent workshop. Then it is taken to church and a child from the congregation lights the candle each week and a there is a short reading.

Fund raising events meant that we could run the branch without charging a weekly fee. We regularly had 25 to 30 girls anxious to join as soon as they reached their seventh birthday. We had a special service in church when they made their promise and were presented with their silver and blue GFS badge by the vicar. The church would be packed and everyone walked to the village hall afterwards for an afternoon tea. Mothers always came up trumps with a delicious spread and the older GFS girls, now mothers and grandmothers, listened the younger ones.

So how do 'times past' compare with 'present day'. The branch is now run by Mrs Joy Whitehead. The annual treat was and still is to be taken to the Wallingford Pantomine. The costs of hiring the hall, heating it, refreshments and equipment all increase year by year. Every GFS Society has to raise funds and it is alway difficult for parents whose purses can only stretch so far. Similarly when help is needed from parents during our sessions on a Wednesday it is willingly given but is not always available as some mothers have younger children or are at work

The Girls' Friendly Society is a Church of England charity founded in 1875 by Mary Townsend, a vicar's wife. It works with women and girls 'where they are'. Long Wittenham is the only GFS branch in the Oxford Diocese but there are GFS housing schemes in Reading and Oxford.

We have tremendous help from Townsend House, the GFS headquarters in London, who offer a fund of ideas to draw on when planning our sessions. The girls seem to love the original concept for the GFS meetings - practical, play, prayer although perhaps they are more inclined to the play! Our active craft sessions usually make for a quieter hall and a greater reluctance to rush out at going home time. We occasionally enjoy fresh air in the churchyard or the field opposite.

This year, 2000, has been an upbeat one. We were given a grant which enabled us to travel. We went to Winchester for a Southern Area Fun Day in July and two weeks later joined the special parade to celebrate our Patron, the Queen Mother's 100th birthday in London. Such excitement, the big world's out there and Wittenham GFS have been to meet you!

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

'He was a common unconsidered man
Who for a moment of eternity
Held the whole future of mankind
In his two sweating palms
And did not let it go.'

These lines about Battle of Britain pilots were written by Air Chief Marshal Sir Christopher Foxley-Norris who 60 years ago took part in the Battle of Britain himself. They were first quoted in The DOOR in November 1998 when Sir Christopher was the subject of our 'God in the Life of . . .' feature.

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Interview...

God in the life of the Godfrey sisters

MARTHA AND MARY is how Lettice *(right in the large picture)* describes her relationship with Dorothy. Unquestionably since their retirement in Dorchester on Thames, pensioners, tourists, young people and the life of the Abbey have benefitted from the energy and devotion of these two remarkable women.

Lettice and Dorothy Godfrey were born and educated in Peterborough where their father was a vicar like their grandfathers, uncles, cousins and brothers. They live together in a thatched cottage in Dorchester.

Lettice insists she was the 'dud' of the family. She read domestic science ('a sort of brides course where you were taught how to treat your staff') at Reading University and then trained as a needlework teacher. She spent her working life in secondary modern and middle schools 'because they were better equipped' to teach domestic science ending up at Berinsfield near Dorchester. She has been on the PCC at Dorchester Abbey for many years and has also been a church warden. She started the Abbey tea rooms in 1977 and ran them until last year raising over £200,000 for charity. She founded and runs a lunch club and a Christmas Day lunch and for 17 years was Brown Owl. Lettice was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to the community.

Dorothy *(quotes in italic)* read French at St Anne's, Oxford before training as a social worker She worked in the Birmingham slums and in a Yorshire mining area but decided social work was not for her and retrained as a teacher. She spent eight happy years teaching French at an English school in Switzerland before returning to teach at St Helen and St Katharine's, Abingdon until her retirement in 1978. For a number of years Dorothy organised the Christian Aid collection in the village, She belongs to a French club and has been churchwarden of Dorchester Abbey where since 1979 she has been sacristan.

LETTICE: One way and another I have always been a bit of a rebel. Between the age of three and four I was introduced to church. I can remember sitting on the nanny's lap towards the back of the church and I saw my father going up into the pulpit. I couldn't understand a word he was saying but I clapped him because I thought it was a nice thing to do. I was removed until the end of the service when I was taken round to the vestry door and made to say sorry to the church warden.

My father announced that the bishop was coming to our church and Dorothy and I aged 12 and 10 were to be confirmed. She was much more docile than me and just accepted it but I didn't want to be confirmed at all although they took no notice. Then I found that my mother was making me this ghastly white dress from stiff silky material with a fitting top, the skirt all gathered into the waist so it stuck out like a ballet dancer. On top of it all was a white veil hanging down over this scarlet wrathful face. If I could have got hold of the bishop's hand I would have bitten it. I always felt afterwards that I ought to have been redone like a vaccination which doesn't take.

DOROTHY: The Abbey has been very important to me. When I first came it was so sad. It seemed derelict and the average Sunday morning congregation was ten or eleven influenced by two old ladies and I hated the thought of being old. But now we are thriving in the Abbey with young people coming up with children.

I like going to church. It's part of life and always has been. The church today is not as dead as people make out. But I'm not a dedicated Christian. I'm a six days shalt thou labour and do what thou hast to do and the seventh is the sabbath of the Lord thy God.

Mine is a more contemplative faith I suppose. It is the most important thing in my life and has become more so. Some things seem less important than they did when I was younger. You don't care so much about what people think of you. I like the freedom of not having to go to work every day. I think you look on people differently when you are old. You try to see them as fellow human beings, fellow Christians.

Retirement was absolute bliss. So many people said to me won't you miss the children and I said yes I shall miss them but I am very happy not to to go and teach them every day. I have had 24 lovely years of retirement and I can thoroughly recommend it. Apart from the Brownies most of my work in Dorchester has been since I retired.

I had the opportunity when I was a church warden to start the lunch club and the tea room and things like that. So many people are willing to help who are not prepared to take responsibility. Over the years I have had about 50 willing Dorchester helpers who will do what they are asked.

I know some people say I'm bossy but if you are going to organise something you've got to be bossy in a nice sort of way. In the tea room it infuriated me to find people who didn't remember the war putting a lot of butter on their plate and then leaving it. So I used to go round with the scones and say will you have another scone and then you can use up that butter that you are wasting. But people didn't mind. There were regulars who came again and again.

I don't think of myself as a holy person. At school you were taunted sometimes for being a vicar's daughter and you tended to react against that. I have been on a number of parish retreats. I used to spend hours on my knees. That's why my knees gave out and I have had two new ones since

I started the lunch club in answer to a letter in the *Oxford Times* from Age Concern saying what a great need there was for people to organise lunch clubs in their own part of the world and I thought well here am I and I got on with it. I started with about ten and it grew to 40 and so I had to divide them into two halves and have week one and week two which I still do. There are lots of people in Dorchester who live on their own and they all say how lovely it is to have someone to talk to instead of propping up a book at meal times.

The Christmas lunch is at the back of my mind. The pudding is already made. When my brother was alive we used to spend Christmas with them and when he died I thought we can't spend Christmas Day on our own so why don't we do something in the village. I put a notice in the parish mag saying would anyone like to come and share a turkey on Christmas Day. It's great fun and people give us bottles and there is an amazing family in the village with six children and every Christmas they come and sing carols and play something for us.

I look forward to the future. It is so terrific when you think about it what life will be like when you are dead. I think about it quite a bit. It's natural when you get to my age. I see it as something wonderful. An old man who died up on the housing estate was a bell ringer and I went to see his daughter. She said she wasn't a bit upset about it because her father had had a stroke and was on the point of death when he was brought back by the doctors. He was a very keen gardener and he told her he had been in a beautiful garden and was not at all afraid of death and then he died. I love gardening too and I think it will be something like that.

You should try and leave your patch better than you found it. I hope I have improved life for the pensioners because they love coming to the lunch club. I think I have improved life for the tourists because they flock to the tea room. Having survived 84 years I remain optimistic. 'As thy days so shall thy strength be'.

I feel that our main contribution has been friendship. I think it was the reason we got this house. There are a lot of us oldies now. I woke up this morning longing to see the sea again because I haven't seen the sea for five years but I don't feel shut in here. There is so much going on. I have always been a happy person. I think it stems from my faith. Life is such a gift, being in England and being in this beautiful quiet corner. It's serene. It's fun.

I couldn't manage without Dorothy's eyes. I can't read a thing and if I want to ring someone up I have to call her. We get on very well and we never quarrel more than once a month and by the end of the day we have forgotten what we are quarrelling about. We are Martha and Mary.

I try to see what other people are really like. There is something good in nearly everybody if you draw it out. I was on holiday once in Yorkshire and we went past a notice board outside a Quaker meeting house. On it was written something which has affected me ever since: 'God's love streams everywhere in the world and there is something deep down in everyone that responds to it and reflects it back and around'. That is true.

Photographs by **Frank Blackwell**

Interview by **Christine Zwart**

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Features

'Spur one another on'

Two prison chaplains are encouraged by life on the inside

OVER THE past nine years I have worked in three prisons and visited many others. For five years I worked with young male remand prisoners, then three years with remand and convicted women from 15 – 75 years of age! And recently with adult men both convicted and unconvicted.

The 'crimes' involved vary from non-payment of fines to deception, to robbery, rape and murder. There has also been a small number of innocent people, eventually exonerated, and some 'political' prisoners – animal rights activists, IRA activists and anti-military demonstrators. The one thing they all have in common, and which they share with prison staff, the police, the courts, you and me is our humanity – being 'made in the image and likeness of God.'

'Spur one another on' is our key text in Prison's Week this year and I can say that I have seen great examples of this over the years. Prisoners encouraging one another in difficult times, on remand, when a mother, father or child dies, staff and prisoners supporting one another when a shared tragedy occurs – the death of a chaplain, a loved officer or the suicide of a frightened young woman on remand for £56 worth of shoplifting!

I have seen the encouragement given by staff, volunteers and other prisoners to another when working to conquer his dyslexia against a background of 25

Prison's Week is 19 – 25 November

years of violence, abuse and ridicule because he was deemed 'thick'. I have seen a young man of 25 with a mental age of six or seven sentenced to a year for hoax phone calls, taken to the heart of a group of men, from 21 to 60 years of age as someone to be valued and nurtured just because he 'is'. Very few of these men and women I have mentioned are 'saints' in an obvious sense, but they have been able to reach out, spur on, for maybe the first time in their lives. Perhaps for the first time they have also begun to learn that they are worth something.

The Revd Philip Derbyshire, Chaplain HMP Bullingdon

God is alive in our prisons today

I HAVE been the full-time Anglican Chaplain at HM Young Offenders Institution for the past two and a half years and my God-given ministry is 'to minister to all those in Huntercombe, both staff and those serving sentences'.

To my amazement I soon discovered that I was also being ministered to by the young men whom I meet on a daily basis. So many of them have experienced tragic upbringings, very often with little obvious evidence of stability, security and love. However I often feel humbled by their friendship, their openness to the word of God and by their resilience. I have learned very much about the love of God from 'the boys'.

We are currently completing our seventh. Alpha Course and to our amazement 152 young men have succesfully completed our courses. There is nothing on this earth which compares with witnessing a young man, who previously had no links with the Christian faith, developing a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. With the help of Holy Trinity Brompton Church we often link those are leaving Huntercombe with 'outside' churches who welcome them with open arms.

God is very much alive in our prisons today, His love reaches out to those in greatest need and to those who open their hearts to him in faith and in sincerity. Please pray for all those who are serving prison sentences and for those who are released, for their families and especially for prison staff who do an amazingly difficult job.

The Revd Geoff Philips is Chaplain at Huntercombe HMYOI

• *Please pray too for prison chaplains Ed.*

Common worship - don't panic!

The Bishop of Reading, Dominic Walker, completes his series on the new **Common Worship** liturgy

It is possible to produce orders of service from *Common Worship* which are almost identical to the ASB, but that is to miss an opportunity of using the variety and flexibility offered by *Common Worship* to meet the needs of the Church in the third millennium

I WANT to offer two words of advice and some practical information. Firstly, don't panic! The Bishop of Oxford has given every parish permission to delay the introduction of Common Worship until next Easter. The official text will be available on the Internet and in book form this month and parishes will decide if they want to produce their own 'customised' orders of service or use the small booklets or congregational cards. The main volume is only really needed for clergv and other worship leaders!

Make it experimental

Secondly, if you are producing customised forms, make it experimental. There is a Victorian church where the builders carved the times of the services into the stonework of the porch because they thought nothing would change! It is best to produce simple booklets first and not to spend money on quality paper and colourful covers until you are sure that the liturgy is working well.

It is important to read the general notes that accompany the services. They provide the theological background and good liturgical practice. For example, at Holy Communion the president (priest or bishop) presides throughout to express the unity of word and sacrament, so the president says the opening greeting, the absolution, the collect etc.

Common Worship texts will be published this month on 9 November in the printed book main volume, in text disc Visual Liturgy 3. 0 and in the normal web format (ie HTML). The Common Worship web site is http://cofe.anglican.org/common.worship/

Helpful booklets

Various booklets have been-produced to explain the services such as Dana Delap and Gareth Lloyd's *A Simple Guide to Common Worship*; *Introducing the new services in your church* (Canterbury Press, f4.99) as well as guides to individual services: *Marriage* by Stephen Lake, *Holy Communion* by Mark Beach, *Initiation Services* by Gilly Myers and Anne Horton's *Funerals*. For practical advice in producing customised booklets, Mark Earey's *Producing your own Orders of Service* (Church House Publishing, f7.95) is essential reading.

Ideas for music

There will be new music to accompany Common Worship although many organists will be able to adapt their present settings. *Music for Common Worship Holy Communion* £6.99 and *Sunday Psalms* £13.99 are both published by Kevin Mayhew. Telephone 01449 737978, email: sales @kevinmayhewltd. com

Training days

There will be a training day 'Common Worship: Non-Eucharistic services for Sunday' at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford on 18 November, cost £12 (includes lunch). Apply to Diane Clutterbuck at Diocesan Church House.

There will also be a day 'Colour, Light and Mood' at St Matthew's, Westminster on 15 February 2001 to look at how our church buildings can be best used for the new liturgies. If your church is thinking of reordering this could be a useful day. The cost is £12 and you can get details from Praxis on 0207 222 3704. Email praxis@stmw.globalnet.co.uk

The last word

And a final word. It is possible to produce orders of service from Common Worship which are almost identical to the ASB, but that is to miss an opportunity of using the variety and flexibility offered by Common Worship to meet the needs of the Church in the third millennium. Good liturgy alone will not fill our churches although bad liturgy helps to empty them, but good liturgy (with clear readings, appropriate music and silence) combined with careful preaching and pastoral care can provide an experience of God which must be at the very heart of worship.

Dominic Walker is Chairman of the Oxford Diocesan Liturgical Committee

Sean's Prayer

The Lord is with you when you are in prison,
The Lord is with you when you are behind your cell door,
He's there with you when you go to sleep,
He's there with you when you wake.
All you have to do is to ask him into your life.
He will forgive your countless mistakes
And when you are alone and afraid
He will give you the strength to go on with his constant love.
If you love Him and trust in Him
He will stay near forever.
So remember all you have to do is ask Him into your life,
And He will care for you with His loving heart.
The Lord is with you,
In Him you are safe.
The Lord is with you,
Your life He will save.

Geoff Philips writes: *Sean is 18 years of age and was recently released from Huntercombe HMYOI. There were occasions when he found prison a nightmare. He attended our Alpha Course and on the Holy Spirit Day for the first time felt the love of God. That night Sean wrote this prayer.*

Diocesan Appointments

The Revd Andrew Buckler, Curate of St Aldates to move to France with the Eglisé Reformée; **the Revd Jonathan Cruickshank**, Team Vicar New Windsor Team Ministry to be Rector of Itchen Valley Winchester Diocese; **the Revd Alan Garrow**, to receive house for duty Akeman Benefice; **the Revd Professor Richard Griffiths**, NSM West Woadhay to retire to Wales; **the Revd Dr Harriet Harris**, to be Assistant Curate at St Mary the Virgin w. St Cross and St Peter in the East, also Chaplain to Wadham College, Oxford; **the Revd David Jackson**, Vicar of Banbury St Hugh and half-time Chaplain at Horton General Hospital to resign as hospital chaplain; **the Revd Martin Lovering**, Team Vicar Abingdon Team Ministry to retire; **the Revd Canon David Meara**, Rector SS Peter and Paul Buckingham to be Rector of St Bride's Fleet Street; **Captain Mike Milne**, Parish Evangelist Bicester Team Ministry to resign; **the Revd Robert Nichols**, Assistant Curate Headington Quarry to be Senior Assistant Priest, Wymondham Abbey; **the Revd Maurice Skinner**, NSM Hurley and Stubbings to retire; **the Revd Oliver Simon**, Rector of St Michael and St Mary Magdalene Easthampstead to be chaplain to the Community of St Mary the Virgin, Wantage; **the Revd Michael Smith**, Rector United Benefice Farnham Royal w. Hedgerley to be Priest in Charge, Holy Trinity Cookham; **the Revd Sue Smith**, Curate Ascot Heath All Saints to be Priest in Charge St Michael's Flixton, Manchester Diocese; **the Revd Phillip Tovey**, Portfolio Co-ordinator and OLM Training Officer for Berkshire to be Diocesan Training Officer; **the Revd Canon Jeffrey Whale**, New Windsor Team Ministry Rector to retire in February.

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Comment

What price democracy?

FROM PHILIP GIDDINGS

DURING this month a new American President will be elected. The signs are that only around half of those entitled to cast a vote in that election – to the most powerful office in the world – will do so. Before we become too sniffy about American electors we should remember how few of us voted in our own council and European Parliament elections.

Disillusioned?

We are told this reluctance to vote is because people are disillusioned with party politics and alienated from 'institutions' – and if that is so, that might be some comfort for those of us who are dismayed at the low turn-out in our own synodical elections, the count for which is taking place as I write.

If we lived in Serbia, we would probably take a different view. There the power of the ballot box, underpinned by the determination of some brave demonstrators, was strong enough to oust a hated dictator. The Danes too showed their appreciation of the opportunity to vote by their high turn-out in their Euro referendum. And when we come to 11 November we will remember the many who gave their lives in two world wars to defend democracy and freedom. Put in those terms democracy is beyond price. So why the disillusionment now so evident in our own institutions, in both Church and State?

Ritual disparagement

Part of the answer may be found in one of those posters I too often see in church halls and the like: the by-line reads 'God so loved the world that He did not send a committee . . .' In fact any references to the fruitlessness of time given to administration, committees, and especially PCCs and Synods can be relied upon to raise a cheap laugh. Perhaps it is too much to expect that sitting on committees or standing for synods could be considered cool but there is surely something wrong with a theology and spirituality which ritually disparages the way in which we as a community make our collective decisions. And its effect is to discourage many whose talents and insights could be such an asset to our community life from offering their gift of service.

Gift of administration

Saint Paul reminds us in Romans 12 that government and administration are gifts of the Spirit, and in the following chapter that the governing authorities are ordained of God Himself.

Churchill said – echoing our theme – that democracy is the worst form of government, apart from any other. Its supreme virtue is its emphasis upon the equal ultimate worth and dignity of every individual human being. That dignity derives from being made in the image of God and that worth has been demonstrated once and for all in the fact that the Son of God gave His life for us. Democracy expresses and protects those fundamental values without which no civilised society can flourish.

So as we contemplate the results of elections, of humble synod members and powerful Presidents, let us pray that God will grant to each that measure of grace which they will need to fulfil the ministry to which He has called them – and let us determine too to play our own proper part in the process by which our leaders are chosen, both in Church and State.

Dr Philip Giddings is Senior Lecturer in Politics at the University of Reading. He has represented the Diocese on General Synod since 1985. This month he resigns from the chairmanship of the Diocesan Synod House of Laity after more than ten years

Evangelism on the quiet side

Philip Roderick (pictured) builds bridges between our crazy modern culture and the inner life of the Kingdom

WHY WHITE-FACE? Some time ago I was invited, as a percussionist, to provide an African-style moment of transition into the main worship event at the end of a major Christian gathering at which Archbishop Desmond Tutu was the keynote speaker. The whole thing was to be televised by the BBC and I was in some consternation! How could I, a white person from the affluent West, in the presence of this extraordinary African prophet and pastor, presume to use my Ugandan bongo drum and call 16,000 people to worship with a home-grown Alleluia chant? Somehow a bridge had to be built that made for a fluid crossing from one culture to the other to make possible creative dialogue and authentic celebration.

Why not white face?

So why not white-face? I had been involved in some excellent Christian training in 'wise clowning' with the gifted Ken Feit years earlier and the radical identification with different groups made possible by the symbolic tradition of white-face was very powerful. One can become both/and: white and black, rich and poor, first world and third world. That was the bridge.

My white face with black tear – symbolising the children dying unnecessarily in developing countries - was an outward expression of desire for deep convergence between brothers and sisters in Christ from totally different backgrounds. So, duly disguised I went to meet Desmond Tutu and asked him to join me in drumming. With his characteristic chuckle, the Archbishop replied: 'No, no. You play, I'll watch!'. The enthusiastic crowd learned the song of resurrection. The bishop grinned hugely and boogied gently!

Now, a new challenge presents itself. How are we to make an effective bridge between our crazy modern culture and the life-changing dynamic of kingdom living and praying? Once again I find myself needing to wear white face. Only this time it will be worn within – an interior, invisible sign of the radical identification with apparently irreconcilable opposites. The challenge and the invitation is for Christian educators and leaders to design thresholds, crossing places, where the hyperactive meets the reflective, the outward looking meets the inward reaching and transformation happens. to that extent will we find ourselves as the body of Christ equipped to make a real contribution to our materialist and overstretched society. This surely is the message of the Epistle to the Ephesians. The witness of Christ the contemplative and Paul the contemplative can provide the much neglected catalyst for effective mission of a different but complementary kind.

Could there be a strategy for what within the Quiet Garden movement I have named as 'contemplative evangelism'?

Contemplative evangelism

To be life changing evangelism doesn't need to be noisy. As well as proclamation evangelism, there is presence evangelism; in addition to fiery evangelism through preaching there is friendship evangelism through meeting. The key question on the quiet side is: how do we equip a new generation of contemplative evangelists and spiritual teachers?

To the extent to which each of us longs to discover personal ways to honour and embody 'life in Christ', and to explore the hidden side of Jesus, of which there is so much evidence in the Gospels, But how do we prepare for evangelism on the quiet side? Who is our target group? What sort of life experience and leadership skill are needed? A Bucks initiative, in association with The Community of the Presence, which is being piloted and earthed in the Parish of St Michael's, Amersham on the Hill is attempting to answer these questions. 'Travelling Light, Dwelling Deep: Transforming Leadership' as a parish-based programme, needs for its successful operation in any local area or congregation a selected and trained core group of two or three high calibre facilitators. In most of our parishes there are people who have real gifts of communication combined with a commitment to personal prayer and meditation. Many such people are under-used by their churches, many have voted with their feet and dropped active membership but are 'reclaimable'. A small team from St Michael's is now ready, if called upon, to work with a spiritual leadership group in a parish or deanery, to share insights and methodology for this quiet evangelism.

Once parish leaders have been trained, the pilot project of 'Travelling Light, Dwelling Deep' has identified three primary target groups: firstly, 18-30 year olds, who are often seriously out of step with the institutional Church and yet who are seeking to find meaning in the mess of things.

Awed not oughts

Secondly, the mid-life crisis adults who have a sense of the mystery at the heart of the universe but who need some clear clues as to how, within the confines of over-busy schedules, to manage the arrangements for the spiritual journey that they long for but cannot name.

The third target group is that huge network of people of all ages who are inspired by the teachings of different world religions, especially Buddhism, Hinduism and Sufism and/or who are involved in some aspect of what is all too loosely referred to as the New Age movement. Such individuals often have a developed spiritual sensitivity and hunger and are far from being closed to the teachings of Jesus and the Christian saints and mystics. Often they have been put off the Church because when seeking spiritual food, they have been met with a plethora of chores and committees.

The resourcing of these target groups now needs contemplatives-in-action who share this vision for education and outreach, for a Church not of the oughts but of the awed.

The Revd Philip Roderick founded the Quiet Garden movement. He is also Vicar of St Michael and All Angels, Amersham on the Hill. To learn more about Travelling Light, Dwelling Deep or about The Community of the Presence please contact Philip at The Vicarage, 70 Sycamore Road, Amersham, Bucks HP6 5DR. Tel/fax: 01494 727553 Email: philip.roderick@ukonline.co.uk

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Analysis

Debt: the campaign goes on

by John Madeley

THE VISION of a Jubilee-style fresh start for millions trapped by debt and living in poverty has been shattered. The Jubilee 2000 coalition, a worldwide network of agencies such as Christian Aid, was pressing for the debts of the world's 52 poorest countries to be cancelled by the end of 2000 – some USD370 billion in all. Jubilee 2000 closes in December this year.

Following the recent meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in Prague all we know for sure is that a start will have been made on cancelling the debts of ten countries, and that a further ten may have reached the point where they qualify for relief by the end of 2000.

Between them the 20 countries have debts of around USD50 billion. But only a small amount of that will be cancelled at the end of 2000, and it may take another five years before the debts are written off completely. For many years, some of the world's poorest countries will still be forking out more in debt repayments than they spend on crucial services such as health-care and education.

The Jubilee 2000 campaign has failed to achieve its objective but in some ways it has been an astonishing success. The efforts of hundred of thousands of people in many countries who tramped shopping centres asking people to sign the global petition for debt relief, who travelled to the G8 summits in Birmingham and Cologne, even to Okinawa, succeeded in putting the case for debt cancellation very firmly on the political agenda.

Without those efforts, we would hardly be talking of a single country having their debts relieved at the end of 2000, let alone 20.

Yes, we misjudged politicians. We failed to take into account the sheer inertia of politicians to rise to the moment when the poor are crying out for help. But although Jubilee 2000 closes, the agencies that make it up will continue to campaign for debt relief. Christian Aid, the World Development Movement, CAFOD and many others, have no intention of letting the initiative slip. They will be campaigning as hard as ever to cancel debt burdens.

Let's be clear about what is at stake. 'Without a convincing programme of debt relief, our objective of halving world poverty by 2015 will be only a pipe dream', points out UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. He is absolutely right. Jubilee 2000 closes; the campaign goes on.

John Madeley is a Licensed Lay Minister and a writer and broadcaster on world development issues.

Letters to the editor

Ecumenical progress, racism in the church and the last words on lesson reading

Facing up to the ecumenical truth

I happened to read Jennifer Henderson's 'Analysis' column on the Vatican's new document *Dominus Jesus*, and it seemed to me that she had either not actually read it, or had not read it properly. The document is an extremely strong and positive piece of theology, arguing from Scripture and Tradition. It is not an ecumenical statement, it simply reiterates the constant catholic teaching on the unicity and salvific universality of Jesus Christ and the Church. This teaching has not changed during the years of ARCIC, nor in 2000 years. The Catholic Church will always hold that the Church must be one, holy, catholic and apostolic in belief and practice. It is anti-ecumenical of JH to attack the Catholic Church for making an honest statement of its beliefs, which are indeed bolstered by a vast array of scriptural and patristic evidence (a fraction of which is used very well in this document). Christians will only be one if they are honest and open to the truth, however unpalatable, as well as patient and charitable.

Dominus Jesus is not an anti-ecumenical gesture, in fact it is extremely ecumenical since it is truthful and honest. I would recommend all Christians to read it (with an open mind and heart), to respond theologically not politically, and then we could have some *real* ecumenical dialogue!

Richard Brown
Marston, Oxford

Mr Frank Davis, a Roman Catholic, writes (DOOR Sept 2000) that it is vagueness on doctrine which 'is holding back ecumenical progress'

We in Iffley know this is not the case. It is the blinkered anti-ecumenism of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese which frustrates real attempts at Christians learning to accept each other across the denominational divide, and to do so as equal partners. In this parish an excellent joint Anglican/Roman Catholic secondary school is to be closed, not because parents, governors and the local authority wish that, but because the RC hierarchy cannot bear the thought that young people should grow up learning to have toleration of the beliefs of each other - a lesson sorely needed in Northern Ireland. And so at the behest of the Archbishop and priests, our school is to close and a separate exclusively RC school is to be opened.

Edwin Townsend-Coles
Iffley

As an ordinary practising Roman Catholic, I would like to express solidarity with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Carey, in his recent rebuke to the Vatican over their ill-judged criticism (my words) of Post-Reformation Churches contained in the Declaration Dominus Jesus issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Bearing in mind the steadily declining numbers of the faithful in this country and others, it is to my mind both foolish and arrogant to dismiss Churches to which so many good and truly Christian people belong as 'not a Church in the proper sense'. I would also like to assure you that I am not alone in thinking this way. In my humble opinion, the issuing body would do far better to re-examine some of their more fundamental doctrines in the light of the 21st century knowledge and biblical studies of recent decade. Perhaps they should give proclamations a rest and listen more. For as someone once said, those who listen may find time to work for peace, justice and unity built on mutual understanding and concern.

Kevin Gover
Hermitage, Newbury

Is the Church of England racist?

I was certainly surprised and rather saddened to read in the Sept issue of The DOOR that Bishop Harries suspects that institutional racism may exist within the Church.

We all know that there are those amongst us who entertain strong dislikes, generally quite irrationally. None of us are perfect and there are those who do not like black people while others cannot abide blunt Yorkshiremen or the loquacious Welsh.

But surely institutional racism is something totally different from individual dislikes. If it means anything it must mean corporate failing, some feeling or emotion which is embedded in the very structure of an organisation. So is it possible to charge the Church of England with this grave fault? I think not: we have, I believe, a fair number of black clergy including a number of bishops, which does suggest that there exists a readiness in our congregations to welcome people of different races and colours to minister to us. So unless our Bishop finds hard evidence of racism among his people I suggest that he thinks hard before he continues to entertain this suspicion lest some of us may come to think that he is indulging in a little fashionable political correctness.

Victor Brown
Oxford

Read carefully

Sometimes readings are hard to understand and I enjoy a variety of people reading, although I might cringe at times at mispronunciations! I admire the courage of the readers and see it as our time to grapple with difficult passages. We all have the reference to follow up if we wish. Rather than criticise the reader I prefer to struggle, with that person, to understand, rather than listen to a piece of oratory

Jill Sands
Iver Heath, Bucks

Those considering the original letter from Gerry Hansen ... might be interested in the comments made by John Pitchford in his *An ABC for the PCC* at page 93. These could form the basis of guidance notes for lesson readers although would not be a full substitute for a dedicated training session, including live PA system where applicable. Being a tax inspector and therefore according to Philip Challen's comments a member of the professional class, I add I do read lessons and feel that I need as much training as the next person. I welcome comments that strive to hone our talents before God, just as the Inland Revenue welcomes constructive comment.

Magnus Smyly
Reading

The thought of an exam for readers to pass was horrible! Surely the natural reading of a thoughtful Christian is generally quite good enough to 'get the message over'?

Gweneth Edgington
Hook Norton

Sorry this subject is now closed – but thank you for your very interesting letters Editor.

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For information and an application form please contact the Personnel Administrator, Diocesan Church House, North Hinksey, Oxford, OX2 0NB. 01865 208201. Fax 01865 790470.

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The Church of England is now well and truly on the web. There are 125 parish internet sites within the Diocese of Oxford alone. We look at the benefits of the Church going online.

Worship o

www.oxford.anglican.org

The **Revd Richard Thomas** looks at the importance of the Internet to the Church, and how we can use it as a resource more efficiently

THE GROWTH of the Internet, and particularly of the Web, opens up massive opportunities for the mission of the Church. The first and most obvious use is in providing support material and information for parishes and church members more effectively and at less cost.

Putting the information on the Web makes it available to many more people than we could possibly reach by using post or any of the other traditional ways. Secondly, it makes that information available to people when they need it, rather than when we decide to send it to them.

Reaching all people

So, for example, we are steadily making all the information we send out in the parish post mailings available on the Web. It can reach more people, and reach them when they need it. Soon, parishes will be able to opt to get the mailing from the Web, rather than deal with the brown paper envelope that thuds through the Vicar's door.

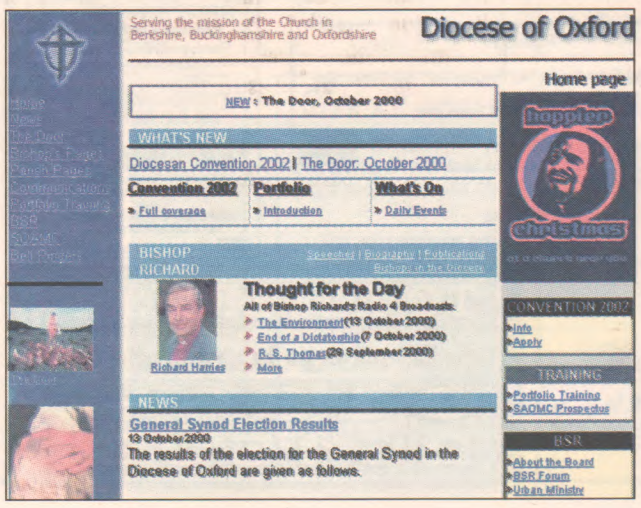
But there is another, even more important reason why the internet is important for the mission of the Church, and that is a combination of (a) the growing interest in spiritual issues in our society and (b) the fact that more and more people choose to 'belong' by association rather than participation, and seek information about their interests from the Web. We need to provide an internet presence that can support them and build their faith. For this reason, we are looking at the possibility of forming a web parish – a way of supporting Christians who are unable, or unwilling, to participate in church membership.

In order to grasp these new opportunities, we have appointed Philip Hind as our Web Co-ordinator for two days a week. Two days a week is not enough, but it is all we can afford at present. He has already transformed our amateur attempts into a first class professional web site, and many more people are accessing it. But now we need to get the web site known – in fact, to make it the first stop for Church members looking for information about what the local church can do for them.

Please put the address – **www.oxford.anglican.org** – prominently in your parish magazines, in your weekly service sheets, and on any other parish publication. You could even put it on your notice board. And please visit the Web site. We are improving it day by day.

The Revd Richard Thomas is Director of Communications for the Diocese of Oxford, and is also advisor on communication strategy to the Anglican Bishops' Network for Mission and Evangelism. He is author of *An Introduction to Church Communication* (SPCK), a General Synod Member and was until 1999 a member of the Church of England's Internet Reference Group

MORE ABOUT THE PICTURES
To the right is the opening page of the Oxford Diocesan web site. The photograph at the top of the page opposite shows Philip Hind helping Diocesan Secretary, Rosemany Pearce to use the web site at the new Cyber Café in Church House. The café was opened in October, and will enable visiters to log onto the web, and search the internet, while enjoying a cup of coffee. Also at the café are tips on how to create your own parish site.



Internet sites

www.2-in-2-1.co.uk
Christian marriage site.

www.christianrecruitment.com
For all Christian businesses and jobseekers.

www.churchtimes.co.uk
The Church Times

www.cofe.anglican.org
Church of England

www.coin.org.uk
COIN – Christians on the Internet – to encourage the use of IT in churches.

www.ship-of-fools.com
Parody of the Church of England

dspace.dial.pipex.com/htb.london
Alpha news

Internet humour

Robert Leach, a member for Guildford, was setting up a website for his diocese and had put his bishop in a picture box, he told the Synod. 'Bishop needs saving,' said the computer, and suddenly ordered 'Save Bishop now!' The willing Mr Leach tried to do so, only to be told: 'Bishop not bright enough.'

by Simon Smith

Sites for sore eyes.

Bible Study and Theology

Bible Commentaries
www.cyberhighway.net/^cochac/library.htm

Christian History
www.christianity.net/christian-history/

Guide to Early Church Documents
www.bu.edu/people/bpstone/theology/theology.html

On-line Bibles
www.geocities.com/Heartland/Acres/3964/bibles/

Resource pages for Biblical studies
www.hivolda.no/asf/kkf/rel-stud.html

Internet Chat

Best of the Christian Web
www.botcw.com

Christian Chat Network
www.cchat.net

Christian Cyberspace
www.chrsites.com/chat.htm

CircaNet – Christian IRC Network
www.circanet.org

In the Beginning
www.serve.com/larryi/begin.htm

Wilibrord's Christian Chat Sites
members.tripod.com/^Erala/chat.html

Mission and Mission Organisations

Agapé
www.agape.org.uk

Church Mission Society
www/cms-uk.org

Church's Ministry Among Jewish People
www.cmj.org.uk

Frontiers
www.frontiers.org

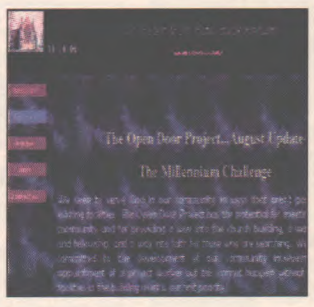
Interserve
www.interserve.org

Operation Mobilisation
www.uk.om.org

n the Web

Examples of parish sites

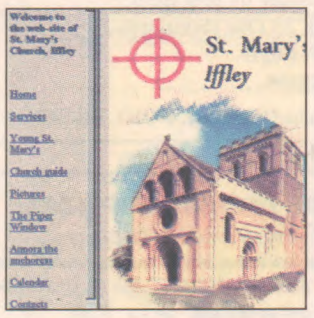
St Michael and All Angels Church, Amersham website includes a 'Meet the Vicar' page introducing the Revd Philip Roderick (see also this month's DOOR page8)



St Peter and St Paul, Buckingham has put articles on their website, including 'If the Church burned down...' and 'Life is a Lottery.'

Christ Church Cathedral's site offers recordings of their well-known Cathedral choir which can be ordered through the Cathedral shop.

Parish of Cogges, Witney has mission links on its web pages with Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.



St Mary's Church, Iffley has a historical page about Annora the anchoress who lived for nine years in a cell beside the church in the thirteenth century.

St Peter's Church with St Mark's Hospital Church, Maidenhead list their annual reports on their internet site which also offers you the opportunity to hire some of the parish rooms.

All the above websites can be found by going to www.oxford.anglican.org/parishes

From nursing to the net

PHILIP HIND is the new Web Co-ordinator for the Oxford Diocese. Aged only twenty nine, the route he came to his current job has been far from traditional. He trained as a psychiatric nurse, and spent two years working at the Warneford Hospital in Oxford before transferring to a career in web design.

Philip graduated from Oxford Brookes University in 1996. It was there that he first got interested in the Internet and taught himself how to make web pages. On graduation he worked as a health care researcher and then after a year he moved to the Runis Unit at the Warneford to work as a staff nurse. While all this was going on, his interest in the World Wide Web was growing and he created his own critically acclaimed site: www.encyclopedia-titanica.org *(pictured above right)* which has over 2000 biographies of victims and survivors of the Titanic disaster. Philip now works jointly for the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies (OCMS) the Network for Anglicans in Mission and Evangelism (NAME) and the Oxford Diocese, creating and developing each of their web-sites.

As the son of the Bishop of Gibraltar and Europe, Philip is very familiar with the Church of England. He and his wife Lorna worship at St James Cowley, where he has been asked to design a web site, along with one for his hairdresser. Perhaps the Warneford will ask him to design a site for them too!

How to make your own web-site

Any parish, Christian congregation, religious community or Christian organisation associated with the Diocese of Oxford can put up a page on the Diocesan Web Site. You will almost certainly find someone in your parish who can help you design your page. Try asking your youth group, or put a notice in the Sunday notices. This kind of project can really bring people together and help them think about what is important for your parish. Send your pages to the Parishes Webmaster – Mark Peers (Email: mark@peers.org.uk). Mark will be happy to answer your questions if you email him direct. You can also contact the Diocesan Web co-ordinator on 01865 208284.

Prayer for the web traveller

Almighty God, the One who creates, loves, and sustains us: we pray for those who visit this site. You know their needs, joys, and circumstances. Surround them with peace. May the fullness of Jesus Christ's love bring them the purpose, wisdom and courage they seek. In His Holy Name we pray, Amen.

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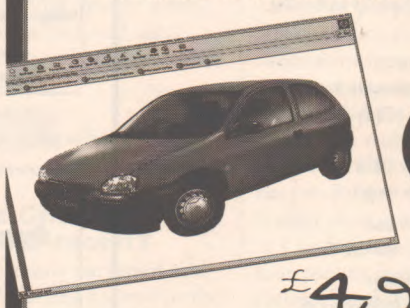

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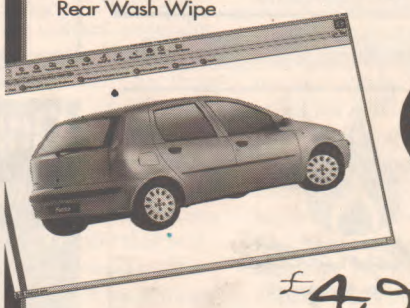

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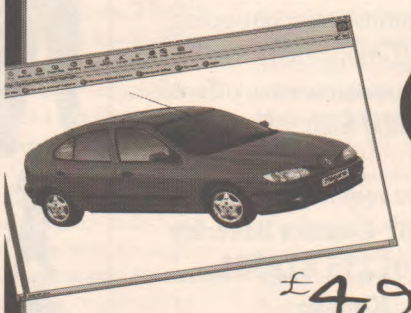

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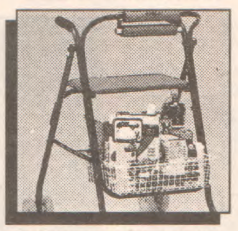

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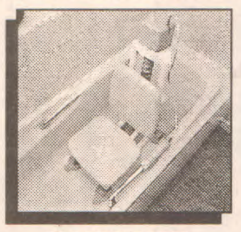

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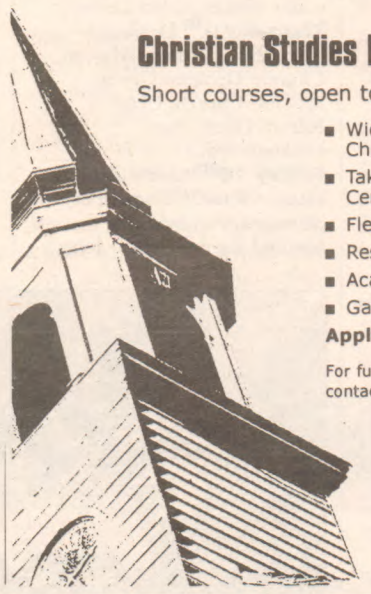
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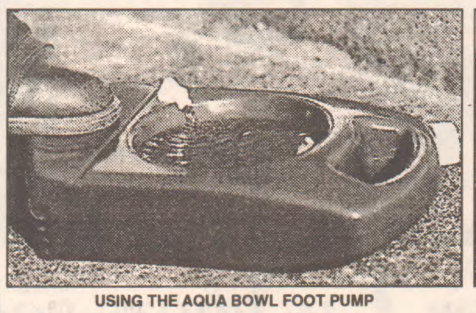

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Time of your life

How to pray with Advent angels

Jenny Hyson, Diocesan Children's Advisor, looks at our family traditions and rituals

WHEN I was little it was tradition to have a pork pie for breakfast on Christmas Day! Uggh! I never discovered where the tradition came from but it was *there* and we ate a pork pie because it was 'tradition'! Most families have a variety of traditions, rituals and celebrations, which are particular to them. Some of these traditions are just *there,* and have been passed on through the family for years with nobody really knowing why they happen or where they started. Other traditions are more important and may mark special occasions like birthdays or anniversaries, even deaths. These become an important part of the family story and can help us feel we belong and give us our roots.

In a similar way the Church has certain traditions and festivals, which can help to give us a similar feeling of belonging. This time we can feel we belong to the Christian family, with traditions that go back thousands of years. These traditions and celebrations are marked through the seasons of the Church year and are often represented by the use of different colours and symbols. They give a shape to the year into which the Christian story can be retold. But how can we make the link between traditions and rituals, which we share as a family, and those we share in the church? How can we begin to celebrate the Christian faith with it's traditions and festivals in the home?

Looking forward

The new year for the Church begins on Advent Sunday so now is a good opportunity to think about starting new family traditions that grow out of the Christian story.

Advent means 'coming' a time when we look back to the first coming of Jesus and look forward to his promised coming again. But for children Advent can just become the count down to Christmas with traditional chocolate Advent calendars marking off Father Christmas.

Why not this year try to hold the two traditions together with this idea adapted from the book *The 'E' Book: essential prayers and activities for faith at home* (NS/CHP) by Gill Ambrose :

Advent Angels

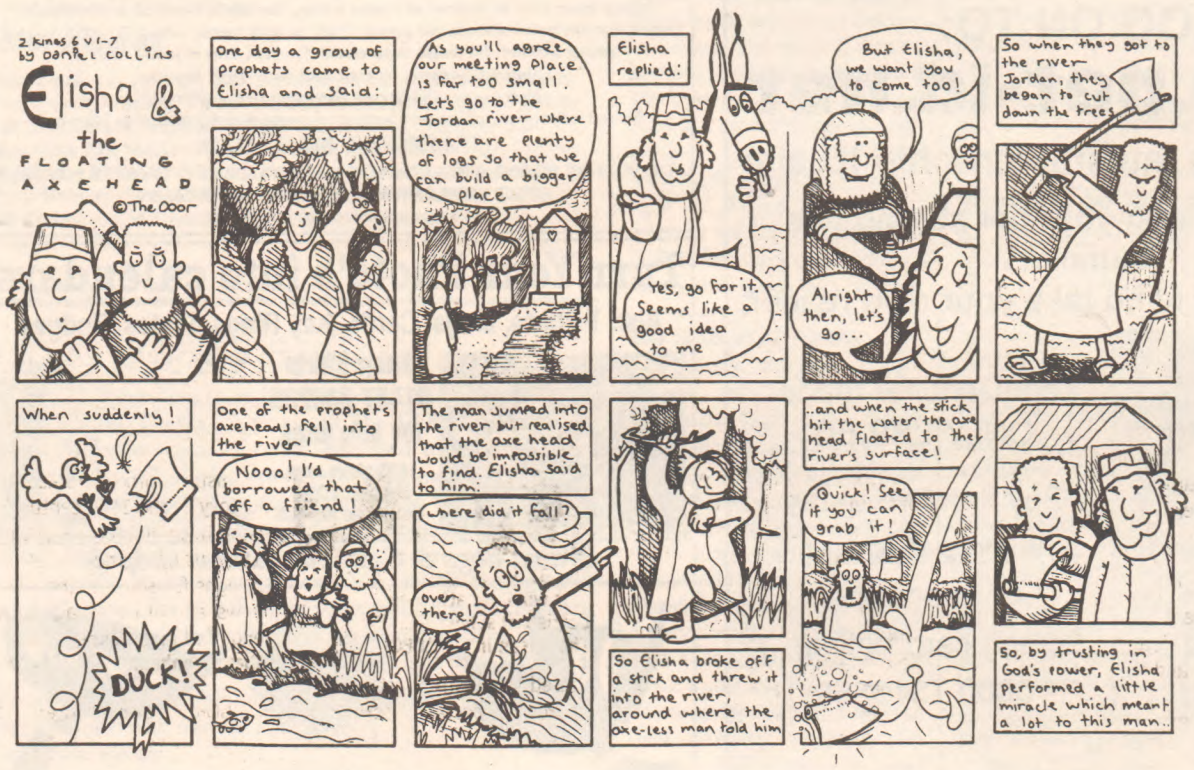
Cover a board or stiff piece of card with dark blue paper.

Using the template *(above)* draw 25 angels on gold and silver wrapping paper and cut them out.

Place angels in a envelope or special box near the board.

Each day of Advent one member of the family could stick an angel on the board and together you could write a short prayer on a little piece of paper.

Pray the prayer together and then roll it into a little scroll and stick it on the angels hands.



Cartoon by Daniel Collins

Emily's 'Froots in Choclet'

by cookery writer, Ann Way

THIS month I am taking a break from writing the recipe and leaving it to my eight year old grand-daughter. She seems to be taking on the family fondness for cooking. Last time she was staying with us, her mother said 'Emily, tell Nan about your chocolate recipe.' I have tried it out and it really is delicious. My 'translation' below:

by Ann Way

Ingredients

1/4 lb good dark chocolate
6 ozs of milk chocolate
1 orange
1 pear
4 strawberries
About 10 seedless grapes
1 peach or nectarine
1 eating apple

Method

Melt the two chocolates in a bowl over a saucepan of hot water. Prepare the fruit by cutting it into small bite sized pieces. The grapes can be halved. Strawberries can be halved or quartered according to size. Peel the orange by cutting peel and pith away with a serrated knife and then cut the segments of fruit between the casing leaving just the unskinned fruit.

When the chocolate is thoroughly melted stir in the prepared fruit. Place the chocolate and fruit mixture in a fairly shallow freezer proof dish, spread evenly and freeze for about two hours. When it is frozen, cut into squares about one and a half inches. It is a nice after dinner accompaniment with coffee or just eaten any time for pleasure.

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Women priests: is it a slippery slope?

A SLIPPERY SLOPE : THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN AND HOMOSEXUAL PRACTICE: R T FRANCE
GROVE BIBLICAL SERIES, £2.25

EIGHT YEARS ago this month General Synod voted to alter the Church's historic practice restricting the ordained priesthood to men. Many feared this would divide the Church irreparably but today we live with two integrities recognised within the Church and face another divisive issue - homosexual practice.

Arguably the most significant development during the long debates over women's ordination was the shift in the evangelical constituency from opposition to support. Among the notable advocates of this was the Revd Dr Dick France, New Testament scholar and former Principal of Wycliffe Hall. Many, on both sides, have wondered whether a similar development will or should occur in relation to evangelical views on homosexuality.

In this helpful booklet Dr France explains why he believes he was right to change his mind in the earlier debate but remains firm in his opposition to Church acceptance of homosexual practice. He argues that Scripture remains his authority in both these stances and that the reasons he was led to a re-interpretation of Scripture in relation to women do not undermine traditional church teaching on homosexuality. Focussing on Paul's teaching, especially in Romans, he shows that a diversity of Biblical witness is found in relation to women in leadership but that this is not repeated in relation to homosexuality where Scripture is wholly negative and advocates the male-female sexual relationship of marriage. In addition, he shows that Romans 1 offers clear theological, creation-based reasons for opposing all homosexual behaviour whereas texts cited for opposing women's ordination are addressing a particular context in the early Church.

France's argument for the logic and Biblical faithfulness of his two stances is strong and will find much support especially among his fellow evangelicals. He fails, however, to address some deeper dynamics in the debates which may suggest there is still 'a slippery slope'. Two questions in particular are important. Having gradually learned to question traditional Biblical interpretations in relation to women's roles and to look beyond initial surface prohibitions (what some would call the 'plain sense' of Scripture) can evangelicals refuse to show the same openness to persuasion in relation to homosexuality ? Furthermore, women's changing roles in society led him to acknowledge the existence of strongly contrasting strands within Scripture. Given this, will Scriptural authority alone (even when it clearly speaks with one voice) prove strong enough to challenge new understandings of homosexuality and the growing acceptance of same sex partnerships in society and parts of the Church?

These questions remind us that the church debate about homosexual practice cannot just be about the important realm of Biblical interpretation. France offers a strong defence of his view that there need not be a slippery slope. However, unless these wider issues are also addressed there is surely a risk that his line of argument will prove too weak to persuade the Church that it must not only resist calls to revise its stance on homosexuality but refuse to recognise 'two integrities' on this issue.

Andrew Goddard
Tutor in Ethics, Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, Member of Oxford Diocesan BSR Human Sexuality Group.

If the most important thing for our children to know is that God loves them, Jenny Hyson's new book (**Love is full of Surprises**, BRF, £3.99) will be a welcome addition to their bedroom clutter! She presents the Bible as a storybook in which we can hear God saying 'Guess how much I love you' in different and sometimes surprising ways.

The first of the 60 easy-reading pages show that the familiar Old Testament stories can be understood as parts of the bigger story of how God loved and protected his special people, the Israelites.

The second part tells us the story of Jesus, highlighting the great surprises of his ministry: the miracles, a leader riding on a donkey, his death as the final victory. In the last chapter, we are introduced to the special surprise gift of the Holy Spirit: 'we too can be part of God's everlasting story'.

The images of wrapped parcels and happy surprises make the book feel interesting and exciting. There are short activities and suggested things to think about as well Bible passages and two short 'thank you' prayers. It would be suitable for a child of about eight to 12 who can read confidently, without being too grown up to enter the spirit of the activities. Sometimes our children have a rather fragmented knowledge of stories snipped almost at random from different parts of the Bible. Here the fragments are integrated into the big picture of God's wonderful and surprising love.

Becky Adams
Children's group leader, Shelswell Group of Churches, Oxfordshire

A roller coaster which misses the ultimate questions

I AM NOT sure whether this collection of essays is a pilgrimage or a roller coaster, or something in between. It is somewhat academic, at times provocative, at times encouraging, but hardly inspirational. Four writers, Penelope Lively, A N Wilson, David Scott and Richard Marsh were invited to explore different aspects of the interrelationship between literature and the Christian tradition, originally for a lecture series in Norwich.

Wistful lament

Perhaps the greatest interest lies in the characters of the writers: David Scott, a parish priest in the Winchester Diocese, a parson-poet pleading for the Christian community to nourish its poets; A N Wilson, the atheist wordsmith, furiously wistful, paradoxically lamenting the end of Christian literature; Penelope Lively, agnostic novelist, reflecting that any god who might exist seems to have done a worse job at ordering existence than her own profession; and Richard Marsh, seeing in David Jones' writing (*In Parenthesis* and *Anathemata*) the reclamation of an authentic poetry of faith for the modern world. Of the four, Richard Marsh, the Archbishop's secretary for ecumenical affairs, seems to be most grounded in the harsh reality of life, which makes his affirmation of faith all the more impressive. In his (and David Jones') focus on the eucharist, he realises what the other writers have missed: that is, the centrality of the Crucifixion and Resurrection to an apprehension of the reality and nature of God.

It would be easy to quibble with the arguments of these essays. A N Wilson is a master rhetorician, lobbing in the occasional epithet to damn his pet-hates – 'die-hards', 'revisionism', 'utter lunacy' – in his demolition of both orthodox and contemporary statements of faith. But the real object of his grief and anger is the death of the romantic tradition which so nourished his and many others' sensibilities.

Unwarranted solace

Meanwhile Penelope Lively, in a gentler but no less potent vein, finds belief falling short, on the grounds that it offers unwarranted solace and that creation is scientifically untenable. Easy to quibble, yes, but I'd rather be grateful for four honest reflections on the interaction of the great stream of literature and the greater stream of religion.

At our home group, we wondered why today we experienced so little of the remarkable ministry recorded in the Gospels and Acts. Maybe this book supplies some of the answer. It's because we have become people of words and not of effect. We like the sound of our own voices. Some of us, like A N Wilson, are very articulate polemicists; some, such as Penelope Lively, tell good stories.

Grasping the plot

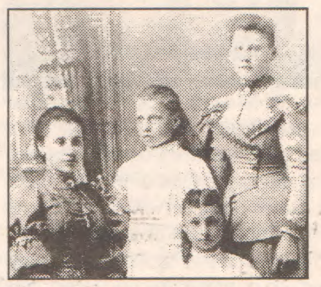
However, in the end, people are concerned not with literature or language, but with life. The dramatic thing about Jesus was the impact he made on people's lives. He spoke with authority, because he was the ultimate Author, and has a much better grasp of the plot. And the danger with a discussion of literature and literary form in the realm of religion is that it so imperceptibly becomes a screen to avoid the central question of existence, asked by its Author, 'But who do you say that I am?'

Michael Wenham
Vicar of Stanford-in-the-Vale

INK AND SPIRIT
EDITED STEPHEN PLATTEN: CANTERBURY PRESS £8.99

Memories from Cottisford and Easthampstead

THE ELEVEN MEN from the village of Cottisford who died in the First World War are commemorated in the church on a brass plaque, which is described by Flora Thompson in *Lark Rise to Candleford*. Her brother, Edwin Timms, was one of them and Flora attended the church and its school in Cottisford ('Fordlow'), on the northern edge of Oxfordshire. *Cottisford Revisited* started when local residents Ted and Joan Flaxman researched the names on the war memorial. The booklet is short but attractively produced and with fascinating details. A barrel organ playing 30 'suitable' tunes was purchased for Easthampstead Church by special subscription in 1823, because of 'the inability and uncertain attendance of some musicians'. The problem was not new, Diane Collins tells us: a music master in the 1600s who tried to get the choir to sing in tune seems to have had little success.



The Baines daughters: the older girls will have attended Cottisford school with Flora Thompson in the 1880s.

Easthampstead: its manor, church and people goes back to prehistoric times to trace the history of the 12th century church, completely rebuilt in 1865 using Burne-Jones' designs for some of the windows, and of the village, now engulfed in Bracknell.

Clare Wenham

Cottisford Revisited *(64 pages) by Ted and Joan Flaxman and Diane Collins,* Easthampstead: its manor, church and people *(112 pages) are privately published and cost £5, pus £1 postage.*

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A cry for help from Ethiopia's prisons

Christian musician **Adrian Snell** went to Ethiopia to present a programme for Dutch television about Ethiopian prisons. What he saw so shocked him that he promised to help. To mark Prison's Week (see also page seven) we include a summary of Adrian's moving appeal

ETHIOPIA has 103 prisons and 100,000 prisoners. The country is so poor that prisons are given low priority. However, a team of Christians known as 'Prison Fellowship Ethiopia' have been given access to the prisons because the State Ethiopian Prison Department acknowledge the help and comfort they have given.

'I was unprepared for the living hell I stepped into when the prison gates were opened to me. In one prison, in Nazareth, west of Addis Ababa, there are 2025 men and 40 women in a prison built 50 years ago for 500. The heat is unbearable - yet there is no water unless a small tanker brings a supply of unpurified water' says Adrian Snell. He describes overcrowding on an unimaginable scale with 240 men in rooms designed for 50. They sleep sitting, standing, lying on the stone floor, head to head, feet to feet surrounded by their possessions. Twenty men sleep in a stench filled area used as a toilet by day. With nothing to eat but bread disease is rife. There are new cases of TB every week, a growing HIV problem and no medical staff.

But the miraculous thing is that there is an enormous hunger for Jesus. In the eight years since the fellowship team were given access, they have reached 30 prisons and 6000 men and women have become believers. However, more than 70 prisons still await a visit. In any case these dear Ethiopian Christians cannot change the appalling conditions because they themselves are so poor.

Adrian asked the Prison Ministry Team leader to outline one project as a first step to bring hope to the prisoners and staff. His first priority, he said, would be to rebuild and extend the sleeping quarters in Nazareth prison at the cost of about £7000. The plans have been drawn up. It would be wonderful if we could help Adrian to raise this money!

You can donate direct to the 'Ethiopia Prisons Appeal Fund' at Natwest Bath sort code 56 00 34 and account number 24393223.

New Asian workers start with Alpha

Two Asian workers have been appointed to work at St Paul's central Slough. On 28 September Wilson and Rebecca Gill and their three children were welcomed at a packed commissioning service attended by the Deputy Mayor of Slough and representatives of the Bishop of Buckingham, Crosslinks and the Salem Project: with music by Slough's Urdu Christian Fellowship. Sixty per cent of the parish consists of ethnic minorities. The Vicar, Mike Cotterell spoke of his aim to 'continue to build up a strong and united church made up of people of every culture, race and background.'. Wilson and Rebecca are already running an Alpha course and an Asian home group.

A meeting of friends. . .

Bishop Colin celebrated his consecration with family and friends and representatives from Oxfordshire life at a party in the grounds of Wesminster Abbey after the service

Friends from near and far greeted our new Bishop

(clockwise from bottom left) **• Keeping it in the family – with Bishop Colin are *(back row left to right)* his brothers Philip and Geoffrey and front row his father, Alan and his sister Gillian • Deirdre Wells responsible for the faith zone in the Dome • Paul Seto *(left)* of the Buddhist community in conversation with Barney Leith of the Bahai community • The Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, Hugo Brunner talking to the Bishop of Oxford • *(left to right)* The Bishop of Oxford's chaplain Ed Newell, Philip Giddings lay chairman of the Oxford Diocesan Synod, Martin Peirce Director of Ordinands and Rosemary Pearce Oxford Diocesan Secretary • John Rees Diocesan Registrar • Jo Harries chats to Christine Zwart DOOR Editor • The Bishop of Coventry Colin Bennetts who was Rector of St Andrew's, North Oxford when Colin Fletcher was a curate there.**

Photographs: Frank Blackwell

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by David Winter

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

'The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, "Look here it is!" or "There it is!" For in fact the kingdom of God is among you.' Luke 17: 20-21

SUNDAY by Sunday we say 'Christ will come again' and affirm our faith. that 'he will come again in glory'. Yet the whole idea sounds so remote from our everyday experience that most Christians seldom give it a second thought, and the season set aside for reflection on it is usually swallowed up in what we might politely call 'the run-up to Christmas'.

The Second Coming has, become the almost exclusive preserve of the cults, the oddballs and the obsessives. For most of the rest of us, it is simply an item in the Creed, something we are 'bound to believe'. That, or less.

Which is a great pity, because that leaves the whole story of God's revelation with the last-chapter missing, as it were - rather like a detective story where the author forgot to tell us if the butler did it or not. In fact, the teaching of Jesus and the apostles has rather a lot to say about the End (rather more, actually, than about the Beginning), because they were concerned to demonstrate that God had not been outmanoeuvred or defeated by evil, but that his purposes would finally be fulfilled - his 'kingdom come, his will be done'. To believe less was to believe in too small a God altogether.

Christians believe in the ultimate victory of God - the triumph of light over darkness, of good over evil, of life over death. That is the heart of the message of Jesus about the kingdom of God. We do not know, because we are not told, how precisely this will come about, nor when. But 'among us', hidden somewhere in the whole idea of the reign of God, is this wonderful truth: 'All shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well'.

Canon David Winter is a former Diocesan Director of Evangelism,a broadcaster and author of many books including **Message for the Millennium (BRF).**

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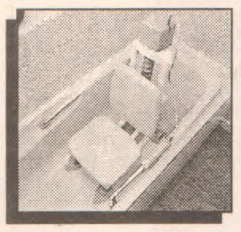

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Cottesloe Christian Training Programme
6 Nov Unnecessary Complications (reflections on the roots of Christianity) Padbury Village Hall, 8pm Speaker: Gordon Goldberg. Book asap £4
29 Nov This Coming Time (a Quiet Day in preparation for Advent) 10am - 3pm Lomagundi, High Street, Nash. Leader Revd Elizabeth Mason. Book by 15 Nov, places limited to 20 £6. Please bring own lunch. *All bookings and enquiries should be made to Julia Lau, Administrator (01525) 375109*

The Harnhill Centre of Christian Healing, Harnhill
11 Nov A training day when skills for managing self harm and suicide will be examined with Karen Moss.
17 - 19 Nov 'Healing through Dance' – a refreshment weekend with Shirley Collins and her team. For both beginners and the experienced.
27 - 30 Nov 'Learning to Prayer Counsel' with Harnhill Team. This course gives an opportunity to experience Prayer Counselling as well as teaching. *Details and booking: Sandy Vearncombe (01285)*

Church Hall, Marston. £30 for course (will take people after first session)
11 Nov 'Developing Capable Young People'. Exploring experiences of living together as a family. Led by Helen Holland and Grendon Haines, Iffley Parish Hall. 10am - 4pm £25 *Details and bookings: Sonia Copper (01865) 777755*

St Theosevia Centre for Christian Spirituality
6 Nov Lecture by Canon Hugh Wybrew 'The Church of England and the filioque' 2 Canterbury Road. Details: (01865) 310341
25 Nov Medieval Russian Church Architecture with Dr Nicholas Gendle £8 (concessions £4). *Details (01865) 557905 or email sttheosevia@onetel.net.uk*

Diocese of Oxford Development and Training
7 Nov 'Common Worship - the new Book' Led by The Revds Charles Chadwick and Phillip Tovey. Cost £10
23 Nov The Rural Church - Crisis or Opportunity? Led by Rt Revd Anthony Russell the Bishop of Ely elect, and the Revd Glyn Evans
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Diocese of Oxford Vocation Advisory Service
11 Nov Half day conference on ordination for anyone interested, guest speaker the Ven Gordon Kuhrt.
Details from John Chorlton, St Aldate's Parish Centre, 40 Pembroke Street (01865) 244713

Foundations of our faith
11 Nov The New Testament and Early Church. A beginner's guide to the new Testament writings, Jesus and the history of the early Church.The Winchester Room, St Mary's Church Witney. *Details: The Revd Will Adam (01993) 773281*

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Conferences

The Religious Experience Research Centre
4 Nov 'Religious experience: some issues in science and anthropology', Professor John Hedley Brookes and Dr Fiona Bowie 10am - 4pm Harris Manchester College Oxford
Details: (01491) 614777

Revelation for Celebration
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rural churches in their mission. *For details call Springboard on (01235) 553722*

SPI-DIR Day Conference
11 Nov 'The Faith Journey of the Spiritual Director' Leader: Sister Kathleen Lyons rc 10.30-4pm St Andrews Church Hall, Linton Road, Oxford. £10
Details from Jeni Hobbs on (01865) 208252

Worship and Music Foundation
18 Nov 'Worship with Instruments' led by Roger Peach 1.30pm - 5pm Christ Church Abingdon. State which instrument you will bring to play and approximate standard (all levels of ability welcome)
Details from Martin Cox (01865) 454078

Quiet Day for working people
25 Nov Supporting others - taking care of yourself. The Cherwell Centre, 14 Norham Gardens, Oxford 10am - 4pm.
Details from Barbara Hayes, Oxford Industrial Chaplaincy, c/o New Road Baptist Church, Bonn Square, Oxford, (01865) 245349
barbara.hayes@talk21.com

Music and Worship Together
2 Dec Mawtins presents 'Sing (and play) with all your heart!' A day of music-making led by Paul Inwood, Portsmouth RC Diocese Director of Music. At Our Lady of Lourdes School, Witney, 10am - 5pm. £6 (students £3)
Details from Hilary Scott, 33 Pound Lane, Sonning-on-Thames, Reading, Berks RG4 6XD

Diocese of Oxford

Prayer

Half Day of Prayer
18 Nov At Thame Barns Community Centre, 9.15am for 9.30am. If you wish to join the Prayer NETWORK or book in for this half day of prayer please ring *Katrina at the Evangelism Office (01844) 0216097*

Healing Service
24 Nov Healing service with laying on of hands and anointing at Holy Communion 10.15am Fingest (Hambleden Valley, near Henley)
Details (01491) 571 231

Caring

Oxford Sleep-Out
18 Nov St Clements Churchyard, Marston Road, Oxford. Also:
• Mini Sleep-Outs by young people any time in Nov in a local youth or community ground, back garden, school playing field or churchyard.
• Sleep In Your Own Bed for £15 per person
• Pub collection on Sat 18 Nov in central Oxford pubs.
Details from David Belton on (01869) 350405 or email beltondavid@hotmail.com

Music

Music at Oxford
10 Nov Vienna Boys Choir. 8pm Sheldonian Theatre
12 Nov Susan Gritton, soprano singing Mendelssohn and Schumann 7.30pm Holywell Music Room.
17 Nov Peter Jablonski pianist featuring Grieg, Debussy, Chopin and Liszt. 8pm Sheldonian Theatre
30 Nov Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment with Thomas Zehetmair on violin 8pm Sheldonian Theatre.
Details and tickets: 0870 7500659

High Wycombe Orpheus Male Voice Choir
18 Nov Concert for Save the Children Fund. 7.30pm at The Kings Centre, Desborough Road
Tickets and details from Rita Pulley on (01494) 563470

Gospel and Jazz
19 Nov Millennium Concert, Hethe Church 7pm. Featuring Lynda Coleman from the US and Wycliffe Hall musicians from Oxford. Tickets £4, £2 children. *Details: Pauline O'Gorman (01869) 277483 / Penny Jacoby (01869) 277971*

Wendover Choral Society
25 Nov A candlelit concert of J.S Bach, Vaughan Williams and Handel, St Mary's Church, 7.30pm Tickets £6, children £2 available from Wendover Clock Tower, Wendover Insurance or any Choral Society member

The Glory of Bach's Music
19 Nov This celebration of Bach's art and life will include great hymns, favourite choral pieces, organ music, piano solos and other instrumental pieces. At St Thomas of Canterbury, Goring-on-Thames. Admission free.
Details from Malcolm Walker (01491) 681819

In Remembrance Concert
12 Nov 7.30pm at Milton Keynes Theatre. Milton Keynes Chorale with the Danesborough Chorus, Milton Keynes City Orchestra, Joanna Cole soprano, Keith Latham baritone and Matthew Barley cello perform Brahms. *Tickets £5 - £15 from Box Office (01908) 606090*

Music at the City Church, Milton Keynes
11 Nov John MacDomnic (trumpet) and Adrian Boynton (organ/piano) Includes Mozart and Puccini. 12.30pm £3
18 Nov The Cornerstone Chamber Choir and Orchestra perform Rutter 7.30pm Tickets £10 and £7.50
22 Nov The choir of the City Church with Broseley Brass Sextet, 8pm. Retiring collection.
26 Nov Sandra Carlock (piano). Pieces include Bach and Debussy. Tickets £6
For details and a full programme of events contact the City Church (01908) 200604

Theatre

6 Dec Riding Lights Theatre Company presents Friendly Fire at Cowley Parish Hall, Oxford at 7.30pm. Friendly Fire is a new play by Nigel Forde, about what happens when our convictions - and our callings - clash irreconcilably with those of our neighbours.
Call 0845 961 3000 for tickets (£7.50 or unwaged £5)

9 Oct - 18 Nov 'Full Circle'
Exhibitions of paintings by Ernesto Lozada-Uzuriaga
Mon-Tues 12 - 2pm
Wed 10 - 4pm
Sat 10 - 12am
Other times by appointment at the Ark-T Centre and Gallery, Crowell Road, Oxford OX4 3LN (Behind the multi-storey car park) (01865) 773499 / 396778

Ark-T Centre+Gallery
Wednesdays 1pm Communion service, everyone welcome. Saturday mornings 10am - 12 noon Ark-T Café

Christian Institute for Counselling)
30 Oct Introduction to Pastoral Care. Six Monday evenings at St Nicholas

12 Nov Caring for the planet. Humanity's responsibility for preserving the created world. Speakers: Julia and Paul James 11.30am All Saints Church Sutton Courtenay

who is committed to spreading the Christian gospel and building God's Kingdom in the countryside. Key speakers have wide ranging knowledge, insight and resources to assist

14 Dec A seminar on marketing and spirituality 2.15pm - 5pm. Led by John Griffiths. Book by 17 November
Details: (01865) 208225

The Dec issue of the Door will be ready for collection on 24 Nov

104.1
Enjoy your Sunday breakfast
Sundays 6 - 9am
Local religious views,
church news, favourite hymns

what's on

What's On is a free service for readers of The Door. If you would like your event included on The DoorPost, send details in writing to the address below before the deadline 15 November 2000.

NOVEMBER

Wed 1 GROVE November special at 'Cornerstone', Savile Way, fudge cake with tea or coffee £1.15

THUR 2 GRENDON Annual service to commemorate the Faithful Departed held at Grendon Underwood Church at 7pm.

FRI 3 DRAYTON BEAUCHAMP Choral Evensong 8pm at St Mary the Virgin with the Bishop of Oxford. Details: (01296) 631365

FRI 3 BAMPTON Deanery service at St Mary's 7.30pm. An opportunity to welcome new Bishop to the Deanery

SAT 4 BOURNE END Sponsored 10 hour reading of Butler's *Lives of the Saints* by the Rector in aid of the restoration of the banner. Church of St Nicholas, Hedsor 8.30am - 7.30pm.

SAT 4 TWYFORD Twyford 65 Club are holding a jumble sale at Charndon Community Centre 2pm

SAT 4 MARSH GIBBON Christmas Bazaar, in aid of Marsh Gibbon Village School, 11am - 2pm. If you are interested in having a craft stall, contact Heidi Martin (01869) 277642

SUN 5 OXFORD University Church of St Mary the Virgin, 10am Preacher The Revd Stuart J Burgess, Ex-President of the Methodist Church.

WED 8 DIDCOT ACTS Autumn Lecture with Gerard Hughes talking on 'Church Unity' English Martyrs Church, 7.30pm Details Becky Fisher (01235) 847520

WED 8 OXFORD A praise and divine healing meeting with Peter Scothern in the Town Hall 7.15pm

SAT 11 DIDCOT St Peter's Newlands Ave. Concert by 'Senza Dolce' at 7.30pm, accompanied by David Baxter, deputy organist of Coventry Cathedral. Tickets £3 (£2 concessions) Details:(01235) 817833

SAT 11 ST GILES-IN-READING. Organ recital by Roger Judd (St Georges Chapel Windsor Castle) Details: (0118) 988 4172

SAT 11 OXFORD One World Fair, Oxford Town Hall. 10am-4.30pm

SUN 12 MILTON KEYNES 'In Remembrance ' concert. Milton Keynes Theatre 7.30pm Tickets from box office (01908) 606090

THUR 16 MONKS RISBOROUGH Quiet morning at St Dunstan's church 'Reflection on things present and past'. Details: Moira Spence (01844) 275759 or Jill Iredale (01844) 346488

SAT 18 SUTTON COURTENAY All Saints Church Christmas Bazaar, 2pm in the Village Hall.

SAT 18 DIDCOT All Saints Church Autumn Fair, Civic Hall 10am - 2pm. Details: (01235) 511448

SAT 18 BLOXHAM Craft Fair at St Mary's Church 10.30pm - 4.30pm Details from Frank Howlett (01295) 720082

SAT 18 OXFORD Common Worship Non-Eucharistic Services for Sundays. Wycliffe Hall, Banbury Road 10.30 - 4pm £12 including lunch. Apply to Jeni Hobbs, Diocesan Church House (01865) 208252

SAT 18 SANDHURST St Michael's Fayre - Sandhurst Community Hall 10.30-2pm Entertainment for all. Details: Margaret Lee (01344) 771013

TUES 21 MERTON Bicester area ladies' lunch. Astley Bridge Farm 12 - 2pm. Speaker, creche; all welcome. Details from Chris Hunt (01869) 346739

THUR 23 NEWBURY 'Preparing for Pilgrimage' - advice and inspiration from Revd David Cook, illustrated by slides of his trips to Israel. St Nicholas Church Hall at 8pm. Details from Chris Watts (01635) 864567

THUR 23 OXFORD Prisons Week Service at Hertford College Chapel, 6.30pm. Details from Andrew Rycraft (01865) 791075

FRI 24 HOOK NORTON A light hearted history of wine and wine making by Julian Curry at the Brewery Heritage Centre. Tickets £25 to include supper and glass of wine from Janet Collins: (01608) 737515

FRI 24 and SAT 25 READING Performance of 'Everyman' with early music sung by Christ Church choir, 7.45pm. Further details from Christ Church Parish Office (0118) 931 3468

SAT 25 EARLEY Winter Wonderland Fayre at St Peter's Church Hall, Church Rd, 2pm - 4pm. Come listen to music in the Winch Room or meet Father Christmas in his Toyland Grotto.

SAT 25 HURST St Nicholas Hurst Christmas Fayre. Hurst Village Hall, 2-4pm. Details from Gill Gatehouse (0118) 978 9141

WED 29 HOOK NORTON An evening of flowers, readings and music at the Memorial hall 7.30pm. Flowers by Pat Fletcher who is a National Demonstrator. Tickets £5 from Rita Wheatley (01608) 737097

THURS 30 DORCHESTER Eucharist as a thanksgiving for the first ten years of CCOW's (Christian Concern for One World) work, and farewell to Christopher Hall. Dorchester Abbey, 7pm. Details: (01753) 868559

DECEMBER

FRI 1 OXFORD World AIDS Day, an ecumenical service organised by Oxon Churches Red Ribbon Group, in the Holy Family Church, Blackbird Leys, 7.30pm

SAT 2 WOUGHTON Candlelit Bazaar, 6pm St Mary's Church. Cake, gift stalls, mulled wine and mince pies. Details: Woughton 665113

SUN 3 SLOUGH Annual advent lesson and carols, 4pm at St Mary's parish church. Details: John Tebbit (01753) 521156

THUR 7 - SUN 10 ALDERMASTON The York Nativity Play at St Mary the Virgin, Thurs and Fri 8pm, Sat and Sun 7pm. Free tickets from V. Hall, The Gables, Church Road, Aldermaston, RG7 4LR

SAT 9 MILTON KEYNES 'Voices of Hope' includes performance of 'Magnificat for a New Millennium' by Fred Kaan, with Indian supper and wines for peace. Tickets £6 (£4 concession). Tickets from the Well at Willen (01908) 662092

MON 11 READING GSS Meeting at St Laurence the Deacon, 8pm Guild Office Details: David Gillman (0118) 9598102

SUN 17 WALTON Signed Diocesan Christmas Communion and Carol Service in Holy Trinity Church, Walton, Aylesbury at 3pm. The preacher will be the Ven Norman Russell, Archdeacon of Berks. All welcome.

Christ Church Cathedral
Sundays 8am Holy Communion, 10am Matins and Sermon; 11.15am Sung Eucharist; 6pm Evensong.
Weekdays 7.15am Matins; 7.35am Holy Communion; 6pm Evensong (Thursdays or Major Feast Days 5.35pm Said Evensong and 6pm Sung Eucharist).

Notices

Harp for Zimbabwe

Amazingly there is no harp in Zimbabwe. This situation was brought to a head when a fifteen year old harpist from the United States came and gave a concert in Harare. The Zimbabwians loved the concert, but were saddened that no one in their country could learn the instrument. Do you know of anyone, or can you donate a harp to Zimbabwe? If so please contact *Mrs Lesley Wallbridge on (01494) 433267 or write to Box 2545, Harare, Zimbabwe.*

Large Print Mission Praise

St George's Church in Tylehurst, Reading are urgently seeking unwanted LARGE print copies of Mission Praise 1 & 2 for the visually impaired members of our congregation
Contact Jim or Gill Johnson on (0118) 942 9870 or email jimjohnson@btinternet.com

Help a child to read

Could you give four hours a week? Do you like children? Do you enjoy books? Are you aged between 18 and 80? If so, then please contact Hilary Burr on (01865) 744284

Invitation to singers

Come and sing choral evensong at St Thomas of Canterbury, Goring on Thames. There are four opportunities throughout the year, the first being on Sun 5 Nov at 6.30pm (rehearsal from 5.15pm). Music - Brewer in D major and Cantique de Jean Racine (Faure) can be borrowed in advance from Gary Biss (01491) 873438
Details from Julia Slingo (01491) 875067

Pen-pals

Are you willing to be a pen friend to a prisoner in Africa? From time to time The DOOR receives letters from prisoners who have become Christians and are seeking a pen-pal. If you are interested in corresponding via The DOOR, *please contact Jemimah Wright (01865) 208226*

Worship in France

If anyone in the Oxford Diocese would like to help with our growth and wished to make a contribution, we are looking to obtain copies of 'Hymns Old and New' or the funds with which to purchase them! For details please contact the Eglise Anglicane de Bretagne (Kermoran 56310 Bubry, France) whose Chaplain Roger Fray was a priest in the Oxford Diocese before moving to France.

Volunteer visitors for new project

The Oxford Diocesan Council for the Deaf is a registered charity and works with deaf and hard of hearing people to meet their spiritual, social and general needs, and to give them a voice and full participation in church and society.
There is a vital need for informal pastoral care in a world where deaf and hard of hearing people often experience isolation and loneliness because of their communication difficulties. Parochial Church Councils should be aware of the benefits of fitting a loop system in their Churches: there may be many people in your parish who would be only too happy to join the worshipping congregation if only they could hear the services! The ODCD offers grants of £300 towards the cost of installation of these systems.
Sign Language services are held regularly in nine centres throughout the Diocese.
For further details please contact the ODCD Chaplain, Revd Roger Williams, on (01235) 868442, or our Administrator, Mrs Janice Barnett, on (01295) 758042 (text or fax only please, I'm deaf too!)

the Door

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Telephone: 01865 208227
Fax: 01865 790470
Email: door@oxford.anglican.org

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- An employer or manager who needs help in selecting the correct human qualities for a job or help to make your staff team function better
- An independent school or children's home head with a particular welfare problem.

The founder of The Manor Consultancy is Mr Adam Tasker. A former Social Services Manager, with 25 years experience in the Care Profession. He has expertise in Counselling, Childcare, Residential and Social Work Management.

He has worked with drug and alcohol issues as well as with families and individuals. He believes that "Walking a little of life's path alongside a person" is a sound creed for life issues.

The Manor aims to provide a private, personal and confidential service that is user friendly and easy to access.

You may contact him at: The Granary, Manor Farm, Horspath, Oxford OX33 1SD tel 01865 8776910 office please leave a message or fax 0781 8061100 mobile.

Website: www.personalhelp.co.uk

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E-mail: lindsay@hopeuk.org
Website: www.hopeuk.org

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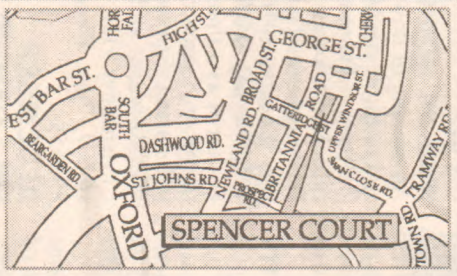

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If you would like a FREE BOOKLET please contact
LUPUS UK,
St. James House, Eastern Road,
Romford, Essex RM1 3NH
Tel: 01708 731251 Fax: 01708 731252
Lupus UK is the national registered charity (No 1051610) which cares for people with lupus

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HIV VACCINE STUDY
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Would you be willing to assist with a Clinical Study aimed at developing a vaccine against HIV, the AIDS virus?

Healthy volunteers are required for a study of a new type of candidate HIV vaccine that will enter clinical trials later this Autumn. At this stage volunteers will be asked to complete a questionnaire about their health and will then be invited to attend one of a series of informal seminars at the Churchill Hospital about the trial. Final approval has been obtained from the Medicines Control Agency and the Central Oxford Research Ethics Committee in order for the trial to commence. Each participant will be immunised two or three times with the vaccine over a six-week period at the Churchill Hospital. Volunteers should be available for follow-up studies for at least seven months.

You should be healthy, aged 18-60 years, without any previous reactions to a vaccination and not at risk of HIV infection. Female participants should not be pregnant or intending to become pregnant during seven months of the study.

Volunteers will be compensated for travelling costs to and from the Churchill Hospital and for the time involved in the study.

INTERESTED IN HELPING?

For further details telephone: 0800 16969 78
or write to: HIV Vaccine Study, c/o Professor AJ McMichael, MRC Human Immunology Unit Institute of Molecular Medicine, Oxford OX3 9DS
or email: hamox@medscape.com or www.oxavi.org
Please note that a response to this advertisement carries no commitment to participate in the trial; you can withdraw at any time.

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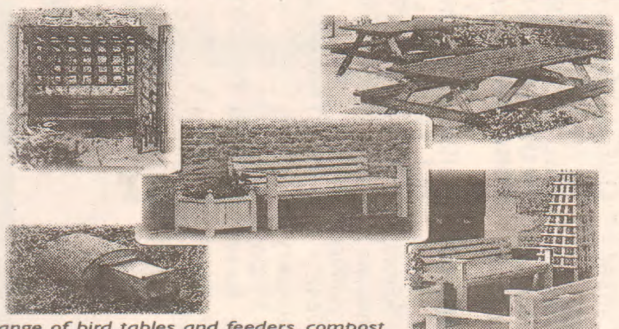

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